

S E R M O N S

U P O N

SEVERAL SUBJECTS,

Preached in the

CATHEDRAL CHURCH of St. PETER

I N

E X E T E R.

And two LATIN SERMONS preached before the
UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE;

By JOHN WARREN, D. D. late Prebendary of
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VOL. II.

L O N D O N;

Printed by JAMES BETTENHAM:

And sold by A. BETTESWORTH and C. HITCH in *Pa-
ter-noster Row*; W. INNYS and R. MANBY at the
West End of, and W. PARKER in, *St. Paul's Church-
yard*; and J. SHUCKBURGH in *Fleetstreet*.

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nam parem esse cum Deo.*

*Sed ipse se exinanivit, formâ servi acceptâ,
similis hominibus factus.*

*Et habitu compertus ut homo, ipse se sum-
misit; factus obediens ad mortem, mortem
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*Retinens fidem & bonam Conscientiam; Quâ
expulsâ, nonnulli naufragium Fidei fece-
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- Page 5. *at bottom for Luke xii. read Matt. xii.*
 Page 27. l. 21. r. graves.
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- Pag. 348. l. 8. *pro Utilitates lege Utilitatis.*
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S E R M O N I.

The Evidence and Benefits of
our LORD's Resurrection.

I C O R. xv. 20, 21, 22.

*But now is CHRIST risen from the
dead, and become the first fruits of
them that slept.*

*For since by man came death, by man
came also the resurrection of the dead.*

*For as in Adam all die, even so in
CHRIST shall all be made alive.*

T H E *Apostle St. Paul*, in these and the SERMON
I.
foregoing words argues against the folly
and absurdity which some of the first
Christians had run into, in denying the reality
of the *resurrection* of our *bodies* from the dead.
They understood the promises of our Saviour
concerning the *resurrection* in a *mystical* sense,
as if they meant our *spiritual regeneration* on-
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The Evidence and Benefits

SERMON ly, or, our being raised by his *Spirit* from the death of sin, to a life of righteousness. And because they thought that they had already attained to this *figurative resurrection*, they held that the *resurrection was already past*, and so *overthrew the faith of some*.

Now the *Apostle* sets himself here to confute this opinion, and the *medium* he uses is a very convincing one for the purpose; which is, the *truth* and reality of our *Saviour's resurrection*. This fact he urges with great strength of reason, intermixing several other *incidental* arguments, from the *twelfth* verse to the conclusion of my *text*. My design is to illustrate to you

I. FIRST, The *credibility* of the fact here asserted by the *Apostle*, that *Christ is risen from the dead*.

II. SECONDLY, To shew you the *necessity* of that *conclusion* which the *Apostle* draws from thence; namely, that we shall all of us be also raised from the dead; so that *as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive*.

III. THIRDLY, To enquire into what the *Scripture* farther teaches us concerning the *nature* of that *resurrection* of men's bodies, of which the *Apostle* is here treating.

IV. FOURTHLY, To make such inferences as naturally follow from the subject, and are suitable to the present *solemn season*.

I. FIRST,

of our LORD's Resurrection.

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I.

I. FIRST, I will lay before you the *credibility* of the *fact* here asserted by the *Apostle*, of *Christ's* being *risen from the dead*.

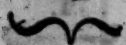
And here, as in all arguments about *matters of fact*, you must be contented with such *proofs and evidence* as the nature of the thing to be proved will admit and allow of, and that is the authentick *testimony* of such persons as may be depended upon; such as we can have no reason to think could be *deceived* themselves, or would *deceive* others, in the thing which they bear witness to. And though this is not properly *demonstration*, yet it is as *just* a ground of *belief*, and is as convincing to the mind of man, as what, strictly speaking, is called *demonstration*.

THUS to illustrate the matter by a parallel instance: Suppose it to be true that none of us ever had a *sensible* evidence of there being such places in the world as *Rome*, or *Geneva*; yet through the *testimony* of so many *credible* persons, who say they have seen both, we are as sure that there are *cities* called by those names, as if we ourselves had seen them. And so in the case before us, we may have such certainty of the truth of what is asserted, from the *testimony* of sufficient *witnesses* concerning our *blessed Saviour's resurrection*, as not to entertain the least doubt or scruple about it; notwithstanding its being a *fact* of so many hundred years standing, we are not capable of hav-

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A



ing any *sensible* proof it, which however is the case of every *other fact* before our own times. It will be sufficient therefore if I can prove *this fact* of our *Saviour's resurrection*, by the same arguments by which any *ancient fact* is capable of being proved, and this I trust to do from the following *testimonies*.

I. FIRST, From that assurance our *blessed Saviour* himself has given of it in the *predictions* and *prophecies* which he was pleased to deliver about it, before his death.

THAT our *Saviour* was a *Prophet*, and a man sent from GOD endued with *heavenly* powers, and an ability to work many great and astonishing *miracles*, and such as were acknowledged to be such, by his very enemies, *the history* of his life does abundantly assure us. Now we know very well that GOD *beareth not sinners*, and accordingly we may be certain, that he would not have empowered our LORD to work *miracles*, and do such things as never man did, if he had been one of so much *falsehood* as to have pretended to a *knowledge* of *future events*, of which he was indeed *wholly* ignorant.

WHEN he assures the *Jews* therefore, that if they *did destroy the temple of his body* *, he *would raise it up again in three days*: And when he gives it as a sign to them, that as *Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly*, so he should be *three days and three*

* John ii. 19.

of our LORD's Resurrection.

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nights in the heart of the earth †: we can in SERMON
I
no wise doubt of its happening as he foretold, unless we can suppose, that GOD would concur with any man in a design of *deceiving* the world. For 'tis allowed that he who foretold this wonderful *fact* was empowered to work wonders and miracles so far surpassing the strength and powers of men or angels, that it was *impossible* that they should be done but by the finger of GOD.

Now if such an one be a *deceiver*, what possible way is there of avoiding the errors he would lead men into? For what plainer proof can any one give that he speaks the words of GOD, than by being distinguished from all men, by the immediate *supernatural* assistance of the *Almighty*? Such a person's *miraculous* works must be *indisputable credentials* to whatever he shall speak upon their authority; Wherefore since our *blessed Saviour* was thus endued with *power from above*, and did in the course of his preaching most solemnly declare that he should *rise again* the third day; We may be assured he did then rise, and that because 'tis *impossible* that GOD should give *testimony* to a *falsehood*.

2. SECONDLY, Another proof of our blessed Saviour's *resurrection* is, the *testimony* of those who had been his *Disciples* and *followers*. Now this argument may be *deduced* in this manner.

* Luke xii. 40.

B 3

I. First,

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I.



I. *First*, *This testimony*, though the testimony of friends, was given by *so many* of them, with such circumstances of *evidence*, that they were not deceived in what they reported to be true, that nothing but plain *demonstration* of their being a *band* of *cheats* and *villains* can weaken the force of it. For the thing they vouched for was a plain matter of *fact*, an object of sense, and what all men, whose *natural faculties* were not impaired, could judge of with *certainty*. It was, that they *saw* our Saviour alive after his *resurrection* from the dead. Now the *number* of those who witnessed to this fact being very *great*; for the *Apostle* tells the *Corinthians*, that he *was seen*, after he was risen, of *Cephas*, then of *the twelve*, after that of *five hundred brethren* at once, after that of *James*, then of *all the Apostles*, and last of all of *himself* *. I say, there being *so many* witnesses to the *truth* of this *fact*, their number alone is a proof of the truth of their assertion, so far as their capacity of judging rightly, of the matter, is concerned.

For so many persons could not possibly be under a delusion so strong as to *imagin* they saw him, if they saw him not. For when the senses of so many men were all employed at once with due care and attention, upon this *single* point, “Whether the person then before them, “ was indeed a *living man*, and the same *Jesus*

* 1 Cor. xv. 5, 6, 7, 8.

“ that

“ that they were well acquainted with before
“ his death upon the *cross*,” it is plainly
beyond all comprehension, that they should
be in any hazard of being *deceived* and impos-
ed upon. And especially if it be considered
how very diffident and *distrustful* they were
themselves concerning this *fact* so long as they
had no other proof of it, but what they re-
ceived from the report of others.

For though our Saviour had foretold several
times that he would *rise* again upon the *third*
day, yet this had no *influence* upon them to dis-
pose them to a readiness of belief concern-
ing the matter; for either through their *hurry*
they had forgot, or through their *dullness* they
had misunderstood, and that so entirely, what-
ever had been said to them upon the subject,
that instead of considering what had been se-
veral times mentioned by him concerning his
resurrection; and instead of *comforting* them-
selves with the *expectation* thereof, they fell
into *despair*, and downright dejection of spi-
rit, and behaved as persons fallen from *all their*
hopes.

THEY were therefore so far from being
under any *prepossessions*, in favour of the re-
ported *fact*, from any thing our Saviour had
said to them, that they seemed to have been
very strongly *prejudiced* against it, and that
they neither believed one another's reports about
it, nor *readily* even their own senses. Thus,
when *Mary Magdalene*, (who first *saw Christ*
after

SERMON I after he was risen from the dead) went and told the *Disciples* of it as they mourned and wept, though they heard her say that *Christ* was alive, and had been *seen* of her yet they believed not.

AND when HE, after that, appeared to *two* of them as they went into the Country*. They were some time before they could persuade themselves to believe their own eyes, nor did they seem perfectly to do it till he had shewed them his hands and his feet, then indeed they were glad†. And accordingly *Thomas*, being absent at the time of his first appearing to them when assembled in a body, continued incredulous still. Their united testimonies could not convince him, he declared he would not yet believe *Christ* to be alive; nay farther, that he never would believe it, except he should see in his hands the print of the nails, and put his finger into the print of the nail, and thrust his hand into his side; and yet when our Saviour had at another time given him the satisfaction he desired, he was convinced at once, and breaks out into this full and solemn confession, my LORD and my GOD §.

Now all these things are a demonstration, that the grounds that the *Apostles* went upon in believing *Christ's* resurrection were such, that it was impossible they should ever have believed it, unless it had been true. They shew that the fact was clear, notorious, and in-

* Luke xxiv. † John xx. 20. § verse 25, 28.



disputable; and that the *evidence* of the truth of it, upon their *conscience*, was the only foundation of their *confidence*, and consequently that they could not be imposed upon in this matter. Such a *number* therefore of *witnesses* proceeding with so much *reserve* and caution, is an *irresistible* proof of their *capacity* of giving a *true* and real account of the *fact*; so that if they were *false witnesses* of GOD, they were *wilfully* so, for as much as it was *impossible* that they could themselves be under any *delusion*.

LET us then enquire,

2. *Secondly*, What likelihood, or indeed *possibility* there could be of their publishing this report, and endeavouring to bring all the world into the *belief* of it, if they really *knew* it to be *false*. Now this *supposition* appears to be void of all *sense* and *probability*, even from the general character, circumstances, and education of the persons concerned in propagating the *pretended* cheat. For the *agents* in this whole matter were *plain* and *illiterate* men, of *mean* extraction and no *liberal* education, and so incapable of carrying on any *intrigues* and *politick schemes* whatsoever, being strangers to all those *arts* of address and management, which are necessary in all such dark designs, and so were indeed absolutely unqualified to act the part of *publick deceivers*, and to form and carry on a contrivance in so exact a *concert*, as is ever required for the success of such sort of *projects*.

So

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I
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So THAT all manner of suspicion concerning a design in the first *followers* of *Christ*, of *forging* a story concerning his *resurrection* to impose upon the *credulity* of the world, is quite taken away by the mere consideration of their general condition and *character*; and doubtless this was purposely ordered by the *divine Providence*, that the *propagating Christ's Gospel*, should not so much as have the *appearance* of being the effect of *human contrivance*, or of the *natural abilities* of those who were concerned in it.

3. *Thirdly*, as the *Disciples* of *Christ* were incapable of carrying on a *design*, of *imposing* upon the world through their want of *knowledge* and *practice* in the *arts* necessary for such a purpose, so it is to the *last degree absurd* to suppose so many men, though *plain* and *illiterate*, yet so absolutely void of *common sense*, and so *little* capable of judging how to conduct themselves in order to their own *peace*, *quiet*, and *security*, as they must have been, if what was charged upon them was true, concerning their design of *cheating* the world into the belief of our *Saviour's resurrection*.

FOR suppose them to be as *profligate shameless* persons as you please, yet *that* man's understanding will itself be justly questioned, who can be prevailed upon to think them all such *fools* or *madmen*, as for the mere unaccountable pleasure of *deceiving* the world, to venture upon maintaining a *story* which they well knew
would

of our LORD's Resurrection.

II

SERMON

I.

would be their certain *ruin* and *undoing*. They had not *courage* any of them to own their *Master* when he was apprehended, but *all forsook him and fled*, for fear of the rage of his enemies, when yet they believed him to be a *divine person*, and is it likely they should of a sudden commence such fool-hardy *bravo's* as to run the risque of *tortures* and *death*, and that after they had found themselves mistaken too; and that he was not *he that should redeem Israel*, which they must all have known if he was not indeed *risen* as he had promised? Can it be any way conceived that if there could be *one person* so *foolishly vain*, as to be willing to die to propagate what he knew to be *false*; that there could be found a *large company* at one and the *same time*, in the *same place*, of so much *monstrous* wickedness and folly? No one can think it possible. But farther,

4. *Fourthly*, LET us consider what was pretended by *those* who denied what the *Apostle* said of our *Saviour's resurrection* to be true, by *those* who murder'd him, and were desirous to prove him what they so often called him, A DECEIVER. Now all that they alledged was, that the *Disciples came by night and stole his dead body away**. But let us see how they proved this, or what grounds there were for such a *suspicion*.

* Matt. xxviii. 12.

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I.

THE very acknowledging the *body* to be gone, when they had themselves set a watch to guard the *sepulchre*, is a good foundation for a proof of his being *risen*, unless some probable argument can be brought *how his body could be carried away*. As to what they gave out of the *Disciples stealing it away*, it was the most idle improbable *fiction* in the world. For in the *first* place as it was highly unreasonable, as I said before, to think, that the *Disciples* would ever venture to affirm and persist in it, that *he was risen*, and that they had *seen* him, unless it had been so; so it is much more unlikely that they would attempt the taking away the *body* from the *armed soldiers*, who were prepared to kill them in their first attempt.

IF IT could be supposed that a few vain wicked men would, for the *pleasure* of *deceiving the world* run the hazard of being called to an account by the *civil powers* for so doing, (which being a thing at some distance, and requiring a slow *formal* proceeding might give time and room for *artifice* and the means of escaping justice) yet that men should *coolly* and *deliberately* run into the face of *danger*, and immediate *death*, by attempting to *steal* away a body from a number of men well armed, and appointed on purpose to defend it from being *stolen*, is beyond all imagination *improbable*.

of our LORD's Resurrection.

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I.



HOWEVER allowing every thing that even an *unbeliever* can have the *face* to suppose, how improbable soever in itself, allowing it likely that the *Disciples* had so far got rid of that fear and consternation which they shewed when their *Master* was apprehended, as that they had now *hardiness* enough to venture to the *grave* where the *body* was laid, in hopes of an opportunity of *conveying* it away; as, in this case they must have come with *fear*, so would they likewise have departed with *haste* and *precipitation*: How then can it ever be supposed, that they would have been so *scrupulous* in observing forms and decency, in this supposed act of *stealing*, as even to stay and spend a great part of their time in taking off the linen that the body was wrapt up in, and the napkin that was about his head, and in folding them up with care and nicety?

THESE are *suppositions too gross* to be allowed; and therefore we may *securely* pronounce, that since 'tis agreed, that there was so much care taken to prevent the *Disciples* from doing what was afterwards charged as done by them; the body was not, could not possibly *be stoln* away, but did indeed arise. But to urge this matter still farther.

AS THE *guard* that was set, and the great *stone* that was *rolled over the door of the sepulchre*, is a plain argument of the *body's* not being *stolen*; so the *account* which the *guard* gave of the matter, the *plea* which they made for themselves, " that the *body was stoln away* " whilst

SERMON "whilst they slept," is an argument of its
 II rising from the dead. For how ridiculous is
 it in the *Soldiers* to pretend the *body's* being
 stoln whilst they slept; for if they were indeed
 asleep how could they know what became of
 the body? It might arise for any thing they
 knew; and they ought rather to have supposed
 it did, because how secretly soever the *Disci-
 ples* should come, the rolling away the stone,
 and the carrying away the body must have
 occasioned so much stir and noise as would
 have awakened one or other of a numerous guard
 out of the profoundest sleep. 'Tis plain how-
 ever, that being asleep they could only guess
 at what had passed, and so must be utterly
 incapable of certifying any thing about the mat-
 ter.

I SHALL mention but one reason more for
 the probability of the *Disciples* assertion, and
 the improbability of that of the *Soldiers*, and
 that is the different ends proposed by the dif-
 ferent witnesses. The *Scriptures* assure us, that
 the *Soldiers* were bribed to give testimony as
 they did; and so the gain they were to make
 by their falsehood is some reason for their be-
 ing guilty of it. But the case was very dif-
 ferent with the *Disciples*. They could pro-
 pose no advantage by being false in what they
 asserted; so far from it, that all the reward
 they expected for their discovery, was tortures
 and death. Because it was an express condemn-
 ing all those who were concerned in our Sa-

viour's death, as the *betrayers* and *murderers* of the LORD of life himself; which they well knew would not fail of provoking them to shew the same *cruelty* and *malice* to them which they had before shewn to their Master.

SERMON

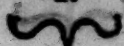
I.

WHEREFORE since we may be sure the *Apostles* did not design to *proclaim* a lie to the world, for no other end and purpose but that they might themselves be *imprisoned* and *persecuted* to death, we must of course conclude that they could have no other reason for *asserting* the *fact* of our LORD's *resurrection*, but because they believed it to be true. And consequently since it was impossible (as has been before shewn) that so many persons should be so often deceived in so *obvious* a case, that our Saviour did rise again from the dead, as the *Scriptures* assure us.

3. THIRDLY, The *third* and last argument I shall now use for proof of our blessed Saviour's *resurrection* is, that *miraculous effusion* of the *Holy Spirit* upon the *Disciples* and first converts to *Christianity* soon after our blessed Saviour's *ascension*. For we are assured by many *histories* of undoubted credit, as well as from the *Scriptures* themselves, that the *Holy Ghost* was given to the *first Christians* in so plentiful a manner, that they were endued with *fundry gifts* and *graces*, particularly those of *speaking tongues* which they never learned, and *working true and proper miracles*. Now since

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since they certified our Saviour's *resurrection*, GOD by giving them a power of doing what was impossible any man should do without his immediate help and assistance, did himself evidently *ratify* and confirm *that* their *testimony*. And what makes this matter clear beyond scruple is, that they worked these *miracles* in the *name* of that *very* person whose *resurrection* they attested.

IN THE *name* of *Jesus* were the blind restored to sight, the lame to their limbs, and the sick to their health; but is it possible that GOD should thus enable men to bring such proofs of their being sent by *him*, which no man, in his right senses, can resist, who yet were all that while endeavouring to *deceive* the world by affirming what they knew to be false? It can never be. As certain therefore as it is that the *Apostles* did sundry great and amazing *miracles* in the *name* of *Christ*, and yet constantly affirmed his *resurrection*, so plain it is, that since GOD cannot possibly join with men in a design of *deceiving* the world, that our *blessed LORD* did indeed *rise on the third day from the dead*, as it is recorded in *Scripture*. And so I have done with what I proposed to offer under this *first* head in order to shew the *reality* of our blessed Saviour's *resurrection*. I proceed now to shew

II. SECONDLY, The necessity of the *conclusion* which the *Apostle* draws from the sup-
posi-

of our LORD's Resurrection.

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position of our *blessed Saviour's resurrection*, SERMON
I. namely, That we also shall all be raised from the dead. *As in Adam all die, even so in CHRIST shall all be made alive.* Now this conclusion is necessary,

I. *First*, BECAUSE our *blessed Saviour* dying for the sins of mankind did pay thereby that *debt* which was due to GOD's *justice*; wherefore *one part of the punishment*, due to man's sins, being the *continuance under the power and dominion of death*, or the *soul's continuing in a state of separation from the body*; since the *debt* was discharged by our *Saviour's death*, (as is plain from his *rising* again, and freeing himself from the *dominion* or power of it) it seems very clear that man is thereby freed likewise from *its dominion*. Because, since *He* suffered *death* for our sakes, and in order to free us from the *dominion* of it, his being *released* from it, by his *resurrection*, is an effectual *release* for man also, for whose sake *only* he suffered death: That we shall then be hereafter *raised* from the dead, stands upon the self same foot of *evidence* that the *fact* of our LORD's *resurrection* itself does.

2. *Secondly*, ANOTHER reason why we may surely depend upon our own *resurrection*, from the certainty of our *blessed Saviour's* being risen from the dead is, because he has declared that *he will raise us*. Now since his rising from the dead was manifestly by a *divine power*, (for nothing less than *that* can be sufficient for so great a work) as the same power can

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SERMON also raise us which raised him, we may be certain it will. Because he having promised it, **I.** GOD by raising him gave *testimony* to the truth of that promise, and therefore since GOD cannot give attestation to a lie, we have all possible certainty that he will also raise us, he having raised him from the dead, who gave us the *promise* of our resurrection.

Now to GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY GHOST, THREE Persons and ONE GOD, be ascribed, as is most due, all honour and glory, praise, might, majesty and dominion, both now and evermore. *Amen.*

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S E R M O N II.

The Evidence and Benefits of our LORD's Resurrection.

1 C O R. xv. 20, 21, 22.

*But now is CHRIST risen from the
dead and become the first fruits of
them that slept.*

*For since by man came death, by man
came also the Resurrection of the dead.*

*For as in Adam all die, even so in
CHRIST shall all be made alive.*

THE *Apostle St. Paul*, in these and the SERMON II.
foregoing words, argues against the folly
and absurdity which some of the first
Christians had run into, in denying the *reality*
of the *resurrection* of our *bodies* from the dead.

THEY understood the promises of our *Saviour*
concerning the *resurrection* in a *mystical* sense,
as if they signified our *spiritual regeneration* on-
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ly, or, our being raised from the *death of sin, to a life of righteousness*: And because they looked upon themselves as having already attained to this *figurative resurrection*, they held that the *resurrection was already past*, and so *overthrew the faith of some*.

Now our *Apostle* here sets himself to confute this opinion, and the *argument* he uses is very strong and convincing, being grounded upon the truth and *reality* of our *Saviour's own resurrection*. This the *Apostle* urges with great strength of reason, intermixing also several other *incidental* arguments, from the *twelfth* verse to the conclusion of my *text*.

My design in discoursing upon these words has been

I. FIRST, To illustrate the *credibility* of the fact here asserted, that *Christ is risen from the dead*.

II. SECONDLY, To shew you the *necessity* of that *conclusion* which the *Apostle* draws from thence; namely, that we shall all of us be raised from the dead; so that *as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive*.

III. THIRDLY, To enquire into the *nature* of that *resurrection* of which the *Apostle* is here discoursing.

IV. FOURTHLY, To make such *inferences* as naturally follow from the subject, and are suitable to the present *solemn* season.

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I HAVE already discoursed upon the *two first* particulars, and I now proceed to the *two* that remain. Wherefore let us now

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III. THIRDLY, Inquire into the *nature* of that *resurrection* of which the *Apostle* is here discoursing. And

I. *First*, THE holy *Scriptures* teach that the same *numerical* bodies of men, whatever dissolution and dispersion of their parts they may have undergone, will be united, at the last day, to their respective souls, so as, together with them, to constitute the same *human persons*, that subsisted before the separation.

Now this is not a *doctrine* that is founded upon *one* or *two* single *passages* of *Scripture* only, but is either *expressly* taught in every one of the *numerous texts* that make mention at all of a *resurrection*, or may be justly gathered from every one of them. The chief of these I propose to take at this time into consideration.

I. The *First passage* I shall mention is in *Job*, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see GOD*. These words do as distinctly assert the point in question, as words well can do it, and yet they have been interpreted to a very different meaning, by

* Job xix. 26.

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those who have no good will to the *doctrine* of the *resurrection of the body*.

SOME would have them understood of a *future state* in general, without reference to any *union* of the *body* to the *soul*, or intimation concerning the *body's* being to be restored to its former condition. But this is to say any thing to serve an *hypothesis*. And if men are to be regarded in their opposition to the truth, by such a bold defiance as this is to all certainty of diction whatsoever, there is an end of *this debate* and *every other*. For I think it is hardly possible to express the *Christian doctrine* of the *resurrection* in plainer terms, nor will it be easy to find a *passage* in the *New Testament* itself that describes it more distinctly. And 'tis certain, that whether they are *Jews* or *Christians* that interpret this place, of the future happiness *in general*, they are guilty of shameless partiality, by thus understanding one expression, [I mean that of *seeing GOD*] in the obvious sense of enjoying the *glory* of his presence in *heaven*, and explaining away the meaning of all the rest, not a whit less clear, natural and obvious, in a perfectly *arbitrary* way.

2. *Secondly*, OTHERS (and they are I think chiefly our modern *Sceptics*) would persuade us to understand these words of *Job*, as containing a *prophecy* concerning his own restoration to his former condition of plenty, health, and splendor. But this is said with as little ground of reason, as what has been already considered. For the words immediately foregoing preclude

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clude all possible acceptation of what is here said, as predicting a *small* event that was *soon* to happen. For if that had been the case, and the whole that he meant was, that he should shortly see better days, for the remaining time of his pilgrimage upon earth, what need could there be for this *exclamation*? O that my words were now written, O that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever*!

WHERE is the propriety of this exclamation, if the event spoken of was just approaching, and concerned himself alone? These words have great weight and *sublimity* in them, when used to introduce a solemn declaration of a *fact* of the last importance, not to himself only, but the whole race of mankind, and which was not to happen before the *consummation* of all things. This will be allowed to be the case, if he is speaking of the general *resurrection*. But if he designs only to set forth his own *single* restitution to the comforts of life, 'tis plain, *this exclamation* must be looked upon as introducing the account of a very *trifling* matter, as *speedily* to happen, in terms of so much *pomp* and magnificence as could only become a case in which the whole world was concerned, and which *all mankind* ought to treasure up in their memories, and live in a constant expectation of, so long as the *rock* itself, in which the *inscription* was to be made,

* Job xix. 23, 24.

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shall endure—That is to the end of the world. But this surely can never be charged upon so *elegant* a writer, even without the consideration of his being also an *inspired* one.

HERE is also a plain connexion between this *passage*, when understood of the general *resurrection*, and the foregoing part of *Job's* defence against the accusation of his friends. They had charged him as a grievous sinner, and ascribed the severity of his sufferings to his guilt, and declared his afflictions to be the *just* punishment of his sins.

Now *Job*, in answer to this, after acknowledging the severity of the afflictions he suffered, and describing the sad particulars of his distress in the most affecting manner; and after an address to his friends in these tender words;—*Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends, for the band of GOD hath touched me, why do ye persecute me as GOD, and are not satisfy'd with my flesh *?* In which he justly complains of their cruel treatment of him, in thus adding weight to his misfortunes, by continually upbraiding him as a *wicked* and an *insincere* man: After this, I say, he *first* engages their attention, by a very solemn exclamation—*O that my words were now written!* &c.—And then appeals, as it were, from their unjust and partial sentence to the *tribunal* of the *last day*, when *their* sincerity as well as *his* would be try'd by the great *Judge* of the

* Job xix. 21, 22.

whole

whole earth. And whom in confidence of his acquittal, he calls his REDEEMER. So that upon the whole, this *passage* must be admitted as a pregnant proof of the point in hand; and 'tis plain that if the *Jews* had no notion of the *resurrection* of the *same* body, it was because they did not rightly interpret this *passage*, and so err'd in *this* particular, as they did in *many* others, because they *knew not*, that is, did not truly understand the *Scriptures*.

2. BUT there is another *passage* of the *Old Testament* as clear and full to the point in question, as what has been now under consideration, and that is in *Daniel*. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt*. Here they who shall awake either to life, or to shame and contempt are said to have slept in the dust of the earth. Now this is true only of the *bodies* and not of the *souls* of men.

THE former only are laid in the earth, and see corruption, the *souls* of men are by nature active and incorruptible, and not laid in the dust, and so can in no sense be said to sleep there, and consequently the *bodies* of men and not their *souls* are the subject of the *Prophet's* declaration in this place, when he affirms that many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall

* Dan. xii. 2

awake.

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awake. And as he speaks here of men's *bodies* awaking to *life*, so also he speaks of *those* very bodies only, which were laid, and did *sleep in the dust of the earth*; These words therefore are as full a proof of the *identity* of the *bodies* to be raised, as they are of any *resurrection* at all. For the bodies of those who *slept* are plainly affirmed to be the same with those which shall *awake*, and therefore 'tis impossible that any other particles, or system of matter, than what composed the *sleeping bodies*, can be meant in this place.

THE *Socinians*, being well aware of the cogency of this argument, endeavour to *slur* it, (according to their usual method) by suggesting a *new* sense of the words, and supposing them to be spoken (contrary to the notion of all antiquity) concerning those *Jews*, who should be delivered from the cruelty and oppression of *Antiochus Epiphanes*: This comment may serve for a *sample* of *Socinian* modesty. For in order to make their *interpretation* good, they must desire these *extraordinary* particulars to be granted them.

1. *First*, THAT *sleeping in the dust of the earth*, may very well signify the being in the power of, and under subjection to a *cruel Conqueror*.

2. *Secondly*, THAT awaking out of this state of corruption and dissolution is a very *proper emblem* of deliverance from slavery.

3. *Thirdly*, THAT this *escaping from slavery* may in a *sound* sense be called, a *rising to life everlasting*,

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everlasting, with regard to *some* of the delivered; and a *rising to everlasting shame and contempt*, with regard to *others* of them. The opening this matter only is sufficient for its confutation. And I may venture to let the *interpretation* before given rest upon the reasons already assigned for it, till some other can be thought of, that may stand clear of those *palpable* absurdities, which *that* offered by the Socinians is full of.

THIS is the light the *Jews* had into this important *article*, before the coming of our blessed *Saviour*; and there is, after all, good reason to believe that *many* of them had a full persuasion of the truth of it, from these passages, and some other more obscure hints here and there to be met with in their *Prophets*. But the Scriptures of the *New Testament* have made the matter incontestable. For

2. IN them we find our blessed *Saviour* affirming that—*All that are in the grave shall bear the voice of the son of man; and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation* *. And St. *John*, that—*The sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every MAN according to their works* †.

* John v. 28, 29. † Rev. xx. 13.

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THE point in debate, is not now whether there will be a *resurrection* to life or no, but whether *that* resurrection shall be of the self same particles that once composed the human body. Now the texts last quoted assure us, that *all that are in the grave shall come forth*, and that the *sea, death, and hell, or, adms*, shall deliver up the dead, and what possible construction can be put upon them, that will consist with the supposition that the *bodies* thus *coming forth* from the grave, and *delivered up* by the *sea*, are not the *same* that were there deposited? If what were once the *bodies* of men who lived here, and were afterwards dissolved in the earth and sea, shall not again be reunited to form the very bodies that were thus dissolved in the earth or sea, with what propriety or truth can it be said, that *the dead that were in them should come forth*, or be *delivered up*? If bodies of a *similar* frame and composition only, if such as are composed of particles of the *same species* alone, with those which were laid in the grave, may be rightly denominated the *same* without any one *single* particle's being *really* and *numerically* the *same*, then there can be no certainty in language at all, and 'twill be in vain to reason upon any thing, from the purport and meaning of any the plainest expressions whatsoever.

THE Socinians therefore have a *fetch* whereby they would avoid the force of our Saviour's words, and that is by interpreting them in a

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spiritual sense, and understanding the bearing his voice, and the coming forth from the graves, to mean only the conversion of sinners, by the word of GOD, from their former sins and errors: But certainly nothing can be more forced and more unnatural than this is. For as much as it is not only not conformable to the manner of speaking used in Scripture, when the conversion of sinners is described, but is inconsistent with the very context itself.

FOR 'tis evident our Saviour is speaking of the future judgment, and is asserting in the preceding verse his authority to execute the same, as the son of man. So that it is absurd to suppose that the words in question should relate to a matter so entirely different, from what was the then subject of our Saviour's discourse; and especially too when what is farther said of the coming forth of those that are good to the resurrection of life, is wholly incongruous with the Socinian supposition: For how can it be said, with consistency, that good men should rise to life everlasting (as to a recompence for their having done good) from a state of sin and error? They must certainly rise to their reward, not from a state of sin and spiritual death, but from a life of holiness and Christian perfection, by which only they can indeed be denominated good.

3. THIS truth of the identity of the resurrection appears also from those passages of Scripture wherein we have the history, whether in the
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old or new Testament of the resurrection of any particular persons to life, after death. For as they are all represented as having the *same* souls, restored to the *same* bodies, and as being by the union of one with the other constituted the *same* human persons they were before : So those instances were all given for *examples* of what was promised should at last be general, and as an ocular proof of the possibility of the thing. How absurd then is it for men ever to entertain any suspicions concerning the *identity* of the general resurrection, when every *particular* instance is an *example* of SUCH a resurrection only?

THIS is confirmed by what the *Scriptures* say concerning *Enoch* and *Elijah*, and those who shall be found alive at the last day. For as the *former* were, and those that are righteous among the *latter* shall be *caught up in the clouds* to be ever with the *LORD*, without their *souls* undergoing any separation from their *bodies* at all ; so it is utterly *incongruous* to imagine that those who die, and whose bodies *see corruption*, should be raised, for the enjoyment of the happiness of the future state, in bodies of a *different* kind, and such as had no relation to them before or were ever any part of their persons. Indeed men must be strangely fond of extravagant and out of the way fancies, who can embrace such a *notion* which is not only repugnant to *Scripture*, but to *congruity* also, and all rules of reason and probability.

THIS point is farther evident from what *St. Paul* says of the immediate consequence of the

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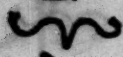
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the resurrection, in these words,—*We must all appear before the judgment-seat of CHRIST, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad**. 'Tis allowed, that what is here meant by the expression — *That every one may receive the things done in the body*, is, that they may receive a retribution, either by reward or punishment, for the things done in the body. Now surely if an account is to be given of every thing done in the *body*, it is not only meet and congruous that the *body* in which every thing was done that is brought into judgment, and for which the *man* is to be rewarded or punished, should itself be partaker of the reward or punishment that shall be due, but it seems also to be in some sort a matter of *justice* too.

FOR since the *body* partook of all the labour and travail that there was in performing whatever the *man* did that was *good* and *commendable*, why should it not partake of the rewards of the same in common with its fellow labourer the *soul*? When GOD shall execute his just *vengeance* on the *wicked* after their future condemnation, if their *bodies* were to continue in a state of *corruption*, and *insensibility* in the grave, it would not be so easy to account for judgment's being past upon the *soul alone*, for such transgressions as it was led to through the cravings and instigation of

* 2 Cor. v. 10.

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the *body*: For why should the soul alone suffer for luxury or theft, for lust or for violence, when it was incited to the commission of these enormities, to gratify and please its companion the *body*?

OUR pains and our pleasures, our hopes and our fears, our desires and our aversions, and all the other *passions* which draw us into sin, are not the effects of any power in the *soul*, but as that is united to and acts with a *body*, and therefore it seems very difficult to account how either of them should suffer *alone*, for that which is the sin of them *both*. But here 'tis demonstrable that whatever truth or cogency there is in this reasoning, for the *resurrection* of the *body* in general, it concludes with all its force for a *numerical* one, that the harshness may be avoided of supposing the *divine justice* to punish the sinner and reward the righteous respectively in *one body*, for what was done by them severally in *another*.

5. To WHAT has been argued upon this point, it has been objected by the *Socinians*, that the words whereby the *resurrection* of the *body*, is expressed in *Scripture*, are often used, to denote the raising or bringing into *being*, what had no existence before, and consequently, that when applied to this subject, there is no necessity of understanding them in any other sense; but that all that they import is, that when the *dead* are *raised* they will come with bodies of the *same species* with those

that their souls animated before the separation, but which need not any more to consist of the bodies that died and were corrupted, than it is necessary that every thing else that is said [*ἀναστήναι* or *ἐγείρεσθαι*] to *rise* or be *raised*, should be understood as brought into some state or condition which formerly it enjoy'd, and from which it had fallen. So when *nation* is said to *rise against nation* *, when *false Prophets* †, or *true ones* ‖, *persecution* ‡, or a *horn of salvation* §, are said to be *raised*, as no more is meant, than that the things spoken of, are made to be, without implying a restoration to any supposed *preexistent* state of them; so in the case in hand, when a *resurrection* of human bodies is mentioned, no more needs be understood, than that true and real bodies will be united to the souls of men; but that it matters not of what particles they are composed, whether the *same* or *different*. But surely this is a very *inconclusive* argument; for at this rate of reasoning, a *figurative* use of a word shall supplant the *natural* and *original* meaning of it, even when the *original* meaning is perfectly agreeable to the truth and reason of things. It may indeed often happen, that expressions may with much more truth and propriety, be understood in their less common

* Ἐγερθήσεται γὰρ ἔθνος ἐπὶ ἔθνος. Matt. xxiv. 7. † Καὶ πολλοὶ ψευδοπροφῆται ἐγερθήσονται. Math. xxiv. 11. ‖ ὃς ἐκ ἐγύγεται μέγα ζων. Matt. xi. 11. ‡ ἐπὶ ἡγερσιν διαγμων. Act. xiii. 50.

§ ἦγαις κέρως. Luke i. 69.

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and *figurative* meaning, than in one more suitable to their *composition*. But to make this a *rule of interpretation* of all expressions of the same kind, is very unreasonable; and to do this as in the present case, when the *primitive* meaning and composition of the word best answers the nature of the subject to which it is applied, is a boldness not to be endured.

SINCE therefore the terms *resurrection* and *rising again* are applied so very often to *bodies* of men to signify their being hereafter to be brought to *life*: And since whenever this shall happen, the bodies so *raised* will be brought into a state of life and existence which they did, before their dissolution, enjoy, who can deny these words their *original* meaning, or can understand them, but as asserting a *raising* again, or a *restoring* the *same body* that died, and not any other, to that union with its *soul*, which it *self* did, but no other body ever did enjoy?

6. ANOTHER *objection* made against this *doctrine* of the *resurrection* of the *same body*, is founded upon a supposed *impossibility* of the thing. The parts (say the men with whom we have now to do) of many particular bodies of men, may, by being dispersed over the distant regions of the earth, sometimes become the parts of *other human bodies*, so as no longer to be the proper and *peculiar* parts of the bodies to which they originally belonged,

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THIS objection, how often soever, and with what airs of assurance soever made, is both weak and profane. For, whatever *transmutations* there may be, of the particles of the bodies of men, and through how many successions soever they have become the parts of *different* human bodies, yet they have been always under the eye of the *Omniscient*. And is GOD's arm shortened, who governs and directs all things, that it is thus supposed beyond the reach of his *power*, to prevent such a *mixture* of the parts of the *bodies* of *different* men, as would defeat his purpose of restoring to every *soul* its own *proper body*, according to his declaration in the *holy Scriptures*?

IF the *texts* are clear to the point, as I trust I have shewn them to be, such objections as these are, do but shew the *rashness* and *profaneness* of the objectors. For the infinite and incomprehensible *wisdom* and power of GOD, will ever be sufficient to compass the *purposes* of his *will*; and whatever *cavils* vain men may make against the *doctrine* of the *numerical resurrection* of the *body* from a pretended *impossibility* thereof; the whole strength of them lyes in this absurd and *profane* supposition, that nothing can be done even by GOD himself, the reason and *modus* of which *man* cannot comprehend.

7. IT is farther objected to this doctrine of the *resurrection* of the same *numerical body*, that if it be not impossible, it is however unnecessary:

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fary: Forasmuch as a man raised with the *same consciousness* of all his actions, and with the *same conviction* of the guilt or virtue of them, that he had when he did them, whether he be raised with the same body or with another, would be the *same person*, and might in just construction be looked upon to be the *same man*.

BUT this is grounding an objection upon a supposition, that is at best uncertain and *precarious*. For certainly no one can pretend to be so well acquainted with the extent and powers of nature as to know, that such a *consciousness* and conviction can be found save only in the very being that is compounded of the *same soul*, and *body*, which were united when the mentioned consciousness and conviction were first produced. Wherefore in such a confessed *ignorance* of the powers of nature, 'tis the height of *arrogance* to charge the *identical* resurrection as *unnecessary*, since, for any certainty there is of the matter from the reason of things, the very supposition upon which the assertion is built, may be a thing *impossible*.

BUT with what propriety is it, that a man, raised at the last day with the *same consciousness*, but a body *not* the same, can be said to be the *same human person*? And yet *this* is the point in question. Human *personality* consists in that *reciprocation* of actions and passions, which results from an union of the soul and body; and although the same *consciousness* is justly esteem-

ed the usual effect of the *sameness* of personality in every man, and will undoubtedly attend every one in the judgment of the great-day, yet this cannot be esteemed the *efficient* cause of personality, because a man will justly be deemed the *same* human person, whether consciousness of past actions be retained by him or no. This is a mere effect of *memory*, and depends wholly upon the soundness of *it*, but the *sameness* of a man's person, can no more be the proper effect of *this*, than it is of the actual exercise of any other single power either of body or mind.

AGREEABLY hereunto it may be observed, that the *criterion* our Saviour gives whereby his Disciples were to know him to be the same Jesus after his *resurrection*, that he was before his death, was his having the same *living body* he before had. When most of his Disciples continued doubtful of his *resurrection*, notwithstanding what was affirmed by *them who had seen him after he was risen* *. We read that Jesus HIMSELF stood in the midst of the eleven gathered together, and *them that were with them*. And that when they were terrify'd and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit—He said unto them, *Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?* Behold my hands and my feet, THAT IT IS I MYSELF, ὅτι αὐτὸς ἐγώ εἰμι;

* Mark xvi. 14.

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That I am *be*, the *same*, the *self-same* I was. Handle me and SEE, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as YE SEE me have. And when they yet believed not for joy, and wondred, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb; and he took it and eat before them*.

'Tis plain our Saviour here puts the proof of his being the *same individual man* who died upon the cross, upon the *truth* of his appearing before his Disciples in the *same living body* in which he suffered. It will be to no purpose to alledge here, that this appeal to their senses was only to satisfy them, that it was not a *phantom* or *spirit* that was then before them. For this doubt must have vanished, upon their *touching* his body *only*; and there could have been no need of that particular examination they were directed farther to make. This doubt was indeed first to be cleared up, that being freed from their surprize, they might attend to the *main inquiry*; and that undoubtedly was this,—Whether the *body* then before them was the *very body* of *Jesus*, with whom they so long conversed, and who, as they knew, was crucify'd, dead, and buried, and whether it was *now alive* as before. And for their satisfaction herein, our LORD appeals to the senses of all present, and bids them, *behold his hands and his feet*, and as

* Luke xxiv. 33, 36.—43.

St. John adds, *his side* also, that they might thereby not only be sure it was a *body* they saw, and not a *spirit*, but the *very* body of *Jesus* also, and that it was now *again alive*, that they might from both facts together assuredly know, that he whom they then saw was *Jesus* HIMSELF. And this had the proposed effect. They were from thence immediately convinced, and they rejoiced thereupon. The words are, *Then were the Disciples glad, when they saw* THE LORD *.

So WHEN afterwards the incredulous *Thomas* was indulged in an extraordinary experiment of our LORD's bodily presence, by being suffered to *reach his finger and behold his hands*, that is, examine the *print* of the *nails*; and to *reach his hand and to thrust it into his side*—Was this all done that he might be sure it was no apparition? Did not *Thomas* tell the rest, that he expected this proof in order to his believing that he saw THE LORD? And what was the effect of this experiment at last? Why, he forthwith acknowledges the truth of our LORD's *resurrection*, and of his divine authority and dignity, and his then *corporal presence* with them, by that *solemn* exclamation—*My LORD and my GOD* †.

I HAVE laid these particulars together as illustrations of what was just now said of our LORD's appealing to the senses of men for

* John xx. 20. † John xx. 25, 27.

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the proof of his being the same *Jesus* with whom they had so long conversed, and whom during his life, they believed to be him who was to redeem *Israel*. For if it be a certain consequence that he who shew'd *himself* alive by divers *infallible tokens*, and proved to the senses of all, who knew him before his death, that the *body*, in which he afterwards appeared, was the *same* in which he was crucify'd; if, I say, it follows from hence (as our *Saviour* seems himself to have plainly taught us it does) that he was the *self-same* *JESUS*, who lived and died, and rose again to *redeem* mankind from sin and punishment, *then* the *same-ness* of a man, or, *that* whereby he may be said to be *himself*, in different moments of his existence, consists in something besides consciousness, even in having the *same living body* he ever before had. And consequently that the supposition of its being needless for the *same body* to arise, in order to the constituting the *same human person*, is not only rash but *inconsistent* with our blessed *Saviour's* own reasoning upon this matter.

8. BUT the restless enemies of this *doctrine*, urge still another thing against it, and that is our *Apostle's* own authority in this very *chapter* of my *text*.

FOR they affirm, that when he is giving an answer to the question put concerning the *nature* of the *bodies* that shall be raised *,

raised *, he uses the *similitude* of a grain of corn's being sown and dying in the earth, and coming again in a different form with blade and stalk and ear, and multiply'd into divers grains of the same *species*, which cannot be supposed to be the very *individual body* from whence they sprung, but of the same *kind* only, and endued with a *like vital* principle, and with *similar* particles. And therefore that the *resurrection* of human bodies, which is the thing the *similitude* was brought to *illustrate*, will be a *specific* resurrection only. That is, that bodies of the same kind, with those that are dead, shall be reunited to their proper souls, but such as are no more the *individual bodies* that did die and undergo corruption, than the seed sown, is the self-same seed with those that are produced from it.

Now here are two things that may be reply'd, either of which is sufficient to silence this *cavil*.

I. THIS is not a just representation of the *instance* used. For it is by no means certain, as is here supposed, that the *many* seeds produced from *one* are only in *likeness* of shape, texture, and other properties, the same with the original seed; for any thing the *objectors*, or any others, know, the whole *plant*, [seed, leaf, stalk, and every thing else belonging to

* 1 Cor. xv. 35. Ἄλλ' ἔρεϊ τις, πῶς ἐγείρονται οἱ νεκροί; ποίῳ δὲ σώματι ἔρχονται;

[it,

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it,] may be of the *very substance* of the *original* seed, which, after the corruption of the other particles in the earth may, become a *vital principle* to the plant that is forming, and may be the *alone cause* of its being the *very individual* plant it will afterwards shew itself to be. But upon this supposition, when the production of a *plant* from a seed that *dies* in the earth, is used to illustrate the resurrection of *human bodies*, the meaning thereof may be to assert the *identical* resurrection of the bodies of men, upon the supposition of there being in every human body a *principle* of the like kind and power, with that in the seed of a *plant*, which will in the last-day be enabled to assimilate to itself extraneous matter, for the forming a body of the shape and dimensions of that which was dissolved in the grave.

Now upon this supposition, (which is also a very probable and rational one) as the body would be raised in the utmost strictness the *same numerical* body that was laid in the grave, so would the *resurrection* thereof be most exactly and most elegantly represented, by this instance of *seed* sown and reviving here used by the *Apostle*.

AND now having shewn, that nothing can be argued from this *similitude*, against the *numerical* resurrection, I will enquire into the *Apostle's* design in this *chapter*, as well to shew what he particularly means by this *similitude*, as also what the plain and necessary doctrine of this *chapter* is, concerning the point that has been so long under consideration, 2. THE

2. THE *Apostle's* design in this chapter, is SERMON II.
evidently to assert and prove the *resurrection*
of the *body* in opposition to all gainfayers;
and in the course of his doing this, he manifest-
ly designs to shew

First, THAT the *resurrection* will be of
bodies greatly changed in their qualities, and
exalted in their powers and perfections above
what they had in the present life. And

Secondly, THAT they will however be raised
the self-same bodies as to *substance*, that they were
before.

I. HE proves the *resurrection* in general by
various arguments from the beginning of the
chapter to the 35th verse, and then pro-
poses an objection that was usually made to
this *doctrine* by many *Jews*, and half-instructed
Christians, and a numerous party among the
Philosophers, I mean, the *Pythagoreans* and
Platonists, whose known principle it was that
the body was but the *sepulchre* or the *prison*
of the soul, and united to it for punishment
of offences in a former state. The objection
is couched under this query, *How are the dead
raised up? And with what body do they come?*
The *cavil* imply'd in the question is really so
weak and impertinent, that our good *Apostle*
thinks fit severely to rebuke the *querist*, and
gives him the title of *fool*, for putting the ques-
tion. He condescends however to give it a full
answer, which he does by shewing that com-
mon experience furnished every body with the
power

power of observing that the *dissolution* of things does not always put an *end* to their being, for that *seed sown* springeth again after its *corruption* in the earth; and that there is such a great *diversity* in the several kinds and qualities of material things, that it is absurd to suppose, that, if our bodies are an *incumbrance* to the soul now, that they must therefore be *raised* with the same degrees of *weakness* and imperfection; for as *one star differeth from another star in glory*, so may the body that is sown *corruptible* and *mortal*, be restored *the same body*, and yet be adorned with perfections greatly surpassing those which it did here enjoy. And what their own observation would suggest to them was *possible*, the *Apostle* assures them would be *fact*. For as much as when the bodies of men shall arise, their properties will be so much changed for the better, that from *mortal, corruptible*, and *animal*, they will become *immortal, incorruptible*, and *spiritual*.

2. WHEN the *Apostle* had thus demolished the objection of these pretended Philosophers, he takes occasion from thence, to add to what he had already asserted of a *resurrection* of the *body* in general, and of the glorious change of its properties, a peremptory decision of the point as to the *identity* thereof. For he says expressly, — That *THIS corruptible must put on incorruption*, and *THIS mortal must put on immortality* *. — This is not saying that

* 1 Cor. xv. 53.

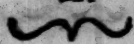
the *soul* which was once united to a *corruptible* and *mortal* body, shall in the *resurrection* be joined to an *incorruptible*, and an *immortal* one; but that the *SAME* body that is now *corruptible* and *mortal* shall *itself* become *incorruptible* and *immortal*. And the *Apostle* expresses himself in a manner as if he had pointed to his own body (as *Tertullian*, and others among the *antients* as well as *moderns* have observed) τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο, and τὸ θνητὸν τοῦτο. *THIS corruptible must put on incorruption, and THIS mortal must put on immortality.* Agreeably to what is said in another place of *Scripture*, that the *sea* shall give up the *DEAD* that are in them, and *death* and the *grave* shall give up *THE DEAD* that are in them. Thus I have dispatched what I undertook under this head, and I proceed

IV. *FOURTHLY*, To make such *inferences* as naturally follow from the subject, and are suitable to the present solemn season. And

I. *First*, *THIS doctrine* of the *resurrection* is a good encouragement against the *fear of death*. There is indeed in all men a natural love of life, and a dread of death; so that our spirits are apt to shrink, and grow chill within us, at the thoughts of the approach of it: But this fear may not only be very much mitigated, but *overruled* by the consideration of our *resurrection*. For *that* that makes death so *terrible* is the consequences of it; and therefore when a man by the holiness of his life has,

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has, through the mercy of *Christ*, good grounds to hope, and be assured of a *joyful resurrection* of his body after death; the consequences of his death are so far from having any thing that is *terrifying* in them, that in all reason the consideration of them should make death *welcome* to him. The world, in which we now live, is a place so little desirable for any of even its most boasted delights, that he that firmly believes a *resurrection*, and has hopes in it, has so little cause to be struck with terror upon a certain expectation of a speedy dissolution, that he should be always ready to resign his life with *serenity*, when the order of providence requires it. For why should he be afraid to *die*, who is so sure to *live* again in everlasting glory? If indeed there were no hopes of a *resurrection*, the thoughts of death, and that vast abyss of eternity behind it, might well fill us with uneasy thoughts, horror and amazement; but since our *Saviour* by his *resurrection* has openly conquered death, and has promised to *quicken our mortal bodies, that they may be made like unto his glorious body*, we should be so far from being dismay'd at death as our *enemy*, that we should meet it with open arms, and embrace it as a welcome *friend*. And

2. *Secondly*, As we may be hence encouraged against the *fear* of our *own* death, so may we be taught hereby to be moderate in our *sorrow* for the death of *others*: And that, when we have pay'd the tribute of a just and natural

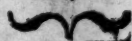
tural sorrow to our departed friends; we should be comforted with the consideration of the certainty of their *rising again*: We should consider that by their death they are only *delivered from the burden of the flesh*; that their bodies are not lost, but laid up safe in the grave, secure and free from all the storms, and troubles and afflictions of this life; that they lye there out of the reach of pain and uneasiness, of harm, and danger, quietly and silently waiting for the sound of the *last trump*, the time of their redemption; when they and all men shall receive the *crown* of their labours.

3. *Thirdly*, As this gives us the reason why we ought to be moderate in our grief, and not sorrow as men without hope for our dead friends, so does it likewise shew us the reason of that *respect* that is pay'd, and those *solem-nities* that are used over their bodies, when they are dead. There was ever in all civilized nations a pious respect pay'd to the remains of the deceased. Their bodies were esteemed, in some sense or other, *sacred*, and even those nations, that antiently burned the bodies of the dead, probably fell into the custom, out of fear lest they should be treated with scorn and indignity whilst they retained the *human* form. Now as they who had no notion of a *resurrection* of the body, had just reason for this regard to the dead bodies of men, from the consideration of the intimate union they once had with the *souls* of their friends, or persons of the same nature with themselves,

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elves, so the *Christian* belief of a sure and certain *resurrection* of the *body* to eternal life, has very reasonably increased the care of *Christians* for decent and solemn funerals. For they hereby not only testify the regard they justly have to the *remains* of those they loved, and whose memories are precious, but declare their belief likewise of the honour that the *bodies* of men will one day be admitted to, when they shall be again united to their *proper souls*, and so at once pay *offices* of decency and respect to the memory of the deceased, and shew also and publickly profess their *faith* in a *general resurrection of the same body*.

4. *Fourthly*, FROM what has been discoursed we should be taught to *die unto sin and live unto righteousness*. This is in *Scripture* called the *first resurrection*, and we have thereby the best grounds to hope for the benefit of the *second*. This is indeed the proper work of him who is persuaded of a *resurrection*; and unless we have this, the thoughts of the other will be so far from giving us any comfort, that we shall have reason to wish that there was *no resurrection* at all; and desire that not only our *dust* would remain for ever in the *grave*, but that our *souls* too might *vanish* into nothing, or *sleep* with the body for ever and ever; whereas on the contrary, if we *purge ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit*, and walk in the ways of truth and righteousness; the reflection upon *that glory* which our bodies are *heirs* to, will make



us not only solace our minds under the heaviest pressure, and long for our dissolution, that our souls may be happy; but it would incite us likewise (in the words of our Church) heartily to beseech GOD of his gracious goodness, to hasten the coming of his Kingdom; that so we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of his holy name, may, at the general resurrection, have our perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul, in his eternal and everlasting glory.

5. Fifthly, THE last use I shall now make of what has been discoursed, shall be to shew the great obligations we are under to be thankful to Almighty GOD through Jesus Christ our LORD for this great gift and blessing of a resurrection.

LET us then consider that a resurrection, as it signifies singly the restoring of us to life after death, is a great blessing.

LIFE is deservedly valued as one of the chief of GOD's blessings, and we have all a natural strong desire of preserving it, which is so firmly fixed in us by GOD, that nothing can root it out. And it is indeed a blessing in one respect distinguished from all others, as it is the foundation of them all, and the means of enjoying any blessing whatsoever. What then can so importunately call upon us to pay our thanks to our Creator and Redeemer, as the surety given us of restoring to us this blessing, after it shall be taken away from

us by death? And accordingly, how can we any ways employ ourselves so suitably at this *season*, as in paying the just tribute of *praise* and adoration to GOD and our SAVIOUR, for this benefit of a *resurrection*. And especially because it is not only a restoring us to *life*, but to a life that we had forfeited by *our sins*, and through our *own fault*.

As *life* is the *gift* of GOD, and entirely at his disposal, the bare continuing of us therein, though we had never forfeited it by disobedience, would have demanded our daily *thanks and praises*: But when we consider that the life we now speak of is a particular effect of *special* and *repeated* grace and favour; it being granted to us after it was forfeited by law; given to us again after we had subjected ourselves to the *curse of death*, by a base and ungrateful, because a wilful, disobedience to GOD; I say, when we consider *our life so forfeited* to be again *restored* to us, our hearts ought to burn with *love and affection* towards that *good and merciful being*, that has dealt so *kindly and tenderly* by us.

BUT we should still farther consider, that the *resurrection* is not only a restoring us to life which we had forfeited, but likewise to a life which is *eternal*, and, if we perform the conditions required, which is also full of consummate bliss, happiness and glory. Our present lives are short and transitory; *few and evil are the days of our pilgrimage* here on earth:

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As the *longest* life is short, so the *happiest* life here is attended with so many allays of mischiefs, and distempers, of ill accidents and disappointments, that if it be not *miserable*, it can however hardly be termed *happy*. Whereas the *life* which GOD is desirous to raise us to, and to which our *Saviour's resurrection* entitles us, will be *doubly happy*. *Happy* with regard to the *continuance* of it, and *happy* on the account of its *perfection*. As it never will have an *end*, so it never can have any *interruption* or abatement; but as we shall then rejoice in a constant course of true unmixed delight, so will the satisfactions of it be infinitely improved, from the assurance that we have of the certainty of their *everlasting* continuance. And this is the strongest argument possible for our being earnest and zealous in setting forth the praises of GOD, so eminent a benefactor, so bountiful a rewarder of the *mean* services of *sinful dust and ashes*.

BUT to conclude, let us all consider who the *person* was that procured these blessings for us, and what he did to procure them, that we may be still farther moved to adore GOD, and be thankful.

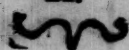
NOW HE who procured these blessings was no other than the *eternal SON* of GOD, *very GOD, of very GOD, of the same substance with the FATHER*; and the means whereby he has wrought this stupendous re-

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redemption for us, was by taking upon him our flesh, and becoming man, and *a man of sorrows too, and acquainted with grief*, by subjecting himself to all the infirmities and necessities of *human life*, to pain, sorrow, anguish, and every other infirmity, *sin only excepted*, and at last to death itself, and a most shameful and painful one too, even the *death of the cross*. And when we consider these things, that GOD himself should condescend to become MAN, and die for our sakes, when we consider him, under his last most dreadful conflict, nailed to the *cross*, and suffering all the bitter agonies of a man dying through *excess of torment*: when we also consider him, groaning under the weight of the *sins of the whole world*, who himself *knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth*; when we consider this, and that all this was done for our sakes, and to free us from *sin and death*, and to raise us to *life and glory*, we must, if we have any sense of *gratitude*, express our thankfulness to our great and most loving Redeemer by all possible ways, especially by leaving and forsaking those *sins*, which gave him so much *pain* and torment. Which GOD grant us *grace* and power to do, for *Jesus Christ's* sake. To whom with the FATHER and the HOLY GHOST be ascribed all honour, &c. *Amen*.

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S E R M O N III.

The Nature and Regulation of Z E A L.

R O M. x. 2.

I bear them record, that they have a zeal of GOD, but not according to knowledge.

TH E *Apostle*, having laboured at large SERMON III.
in the foregoing chapter, to convince
the *Jews* of that great and fundamental
error they were in, in adhering so obstinately
to the *law of Moses*, and depending on that
alone for *justification* and salvation, in opposi-
tion to that *new*, and more excellent way pro-
posed to them by the *Gospel*, through *faith in*
Christ, proceeds here in this to testify his ten-
der concern for them, his brethren of the
circumcision, the converted *Jews*; Brethren,
my heart's desire and prayer to GOD for Israel



is, that they may be saved, i. e. come to the saving knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; and then he makes this short decision of the whole case, in the words I have now read; For I bear them, &c. That is, "I must needs do them this justice to own that they do shew a hearty concern and zeal for their religion, and have a mighty reverence for the laws of Moses, as given and established among them by GOD himself; they have a zeal of GOD: But after all, this is no such commendable zeal, being founded only in a gross and fatal mistake of the end and design of that very law, they so eagerly contend for: it is an ignorant zeal, that dishonours GOD in that very thing wherein it pretends most of all to honour him; that makes one divine dispensation thwart and contradict another; a blind misguided zeal, that prefers types and shadows before the real substance of things, bondage before liberty, and their own righteousness by the works of the law (a thing morally impossible) before the righteousness of GOD, which is not only possible, but very easy through the grace and mercy of the Gospel."

It is not my design now to enter upon this argument, but only to take the words at large, as they contain in them a general rule whereby to distinguish between the truth and goodness of any cause, and the deceitful and counterfeit
appear-

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appearances of it, and more particularly to apply them to such principles and practices, as gave occasion to *this day's solemnity* *. *I bear them record, that they have a zeal of GOD, but not according to knowledge.* In which words there are these two things observable.

I. FIRST, A due commendation given of *true zeal*, that it is a very useful and *necessary ingredient* of religion. *I bear them record, that they have a zeal of GOD.* The *Jews* were so far in the right, that they had a *heartly desire* and will to please GOD.

II. SECONDLY, That the *goodness* and excellence of *zeal*, is not to be estimated by the *warmth* and vehemence of its *passion*, but by the *truth* and *goodness* of the cause in which it is engaged. *They have a zeal of GOD, but not according to knowledge.* The *choice* of the *object* gives denomination to our *zeal*, and according as the management of that is, whether *good* or *bad*, so will our *zeal* be, both in itself and its effects and consequence.

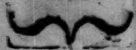
I SHALL endeavour to illustrate these two observations, by discoursing to you on these following particulars.

I. FIRST, I will briefly state the notion, and enquire into the *nature* and properties of *zeal*, particularly that which the *Apostle* calls a *zeal of GOD*, or a *religious zeal*.

* Preached upon the fifth of November.

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II. SECONDE,



II. SECONDLY, Shew what are the true and proper *bounds* and measures of it.

III. THIRDLY, Represent to you the dangerous *effects* and consequences of an extravagant and misguided zeal.

IV. FOURTHLY and LASTY, Apply the whole.

I. FIRST, I will briefly state the notion, and enquire into the nature and properties of zeal, particularly that which the *Apostle* calls a *zeal of GOD*, or a *religious zeal*.

Now *zeal*, properly speaking, is nothing else but a certain warmth of temper in a man, arising from the consideration of some good or evil which is before him, with an earnest desire and endeavour to obtain *the one*, and to avoid the *other*; and accordingly, 'tis not so much *one single* passion or affection of the soul as the *complicated result* of a great many of them put together. *Love* indeed is generally the *master* ingredient and leading passion in our *zeal*, but 'tis not love alone or fear, or desire, or hatred *alone*, that constitutes it, but the *united* force and vigour of them all: It is the heat of *love* animated and raised into flame by strong *hopes* and vehement *desires*, by watchful *fears* and *angry* resentments and an irreconcilable *hatred* of whatever opposes it. So that every passion has its share, you see, more or less, in *zeal*, and all of them do jointly concur in the composition of it,

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IN SHORT, *zeal* is the full purpose and fixed resolution of a man's mind, summoning all its powers and passions, and bending them *one way*, towards the accomplishing of that *one* particular design it aims at; and by *that* we may easily guess what a *zeal* of GOD, or a *religious zeal* is; 'tis a *vehement affection*, and a strong inclination of mind, to the cause of GOD and *religion*, a passionate desire that GOD in all things may be obey'd and glorified; that the honour of his name may be advanced, his worship propagated, and his laws duly executed among men. When with eager hopes, and restless fears we contend for the *truth* of *Christ's* doctrine, for the prosperity of his *Church*, for the greater *glory* and enlargement of his *Kingdom* in the world, and conceive an inward grief, and dislike at whatever opposes the success of it. In a word, when all our thoughts, our wishes, and endeavours are *solicitously* bent to promote the interests of truth and goodness, to correct error, to convince gainsayers, to silence *schism*, to extirpate *heresies* in the *Church* of *Christ*, that his *Church* may be a *glorious Church*, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it may be holy and without blemish, as the *Apostle* speaks *.

Now this (it must be owned) is an excellent disposition in a man, not only highly use-

* Eph. v: 27.

ful,



ful, but extremely *necessary* to all the ends and purposes of a godly life: 'Tis what the Scriptures frequently recommend to us as the great ornament and perfection of all other *Christian* virtues, the very life and soul of a religious practice, and 'tis what the *Apostle* approves here in the *Jews*, as a thing commendable in itself, though he disallows their way and manner of expressing it. *I bear them record, they have a zeal of GOD.*

INDEED a *zeal* for religion is always thus far commendable, that it is a plain argument of the *sincerity* and good intentions of a man, that he is *inwardly* persuaded of the truth and goodness of what he *outwardly* professes. An evident demonstration that religion is a *ruling principle* in him, that influences all the powers of the soul, warms him into action, to work the work of GOD, in the best way and method he can possibly contrive. And this is certain, that if our *zeal* can be good for any thing, or if any thing is good enough to deserve our *zeal*, it never can be bestowed better than in the service of GOD and religion: *It is good always to be zealously affected* in such a cause; and I desire to have this observed, that *true religion* and *zeal* are so inseparable, that they do mutually beget and support each other. *Religion*, where 'tis real, does naturally produce *zeal*, and the *zeal* of its professors does as naturally lead them to maintain the esteem and credit of *religion*,
and

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and wherever *zeal* is not, 'tis a very plain case SERMON III.
that all our *religion* is no better than an *empty form*, a cold indifferency, or a supine neglect of GOD and goodness.

THUS far then we are sure of our *zeal*, that as *religion* makes it our duty, so 'twill always justify us in the exercise of it, as to the *general* design and aim of it. But after all, it must be confessed, that as useful a thing as *zeal* is, for the carrying on the cause of *religion*, and supporting its interests in the world, there are a great many difficulties and niceties to be observed in the *right management* of it, so as to make it *thoroughly* good and commendable. It is not always so certain a *friend* of *religion*, but that it may be, and very often does become its *enemy*, and oppose the true interest of religion, whilst it fights under the *colours* of it; much like the *undisciplined* courage of a *bold* warrior, that is capable indeed and willing to do signal service, but for the most part ruins a good cause for want of *conduct*.

FOR this is certain that a good *intention* or resolution in the main, as it cannot be called doing good, so it may in many instances be very far from doing it. It is the easiest thing in the world to design well, and to express our eager *zeal* in prosecuting that design; but the *virtue* of all this lyes in that which is the *real* difficulty, in fixing our design *right*, as to particular cases; and duly

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proportioning our *zeal*, in all the instances, and several circumstances of it, so as to fall in regularly with the *general scope* and design of it; that as *religion* is the great end of our *zeal*, so the means it uses, and the several steps it takes, may be exactly suited to the end, and consonant to the rules and dictates of *religion*.

AND herein consists the proper excellency of a truly *religious zeal*. Now the reason why this is a thing so difficult, so much pretended to, and so rarely hit upon right, even by many of those who sincerely profess it, seems plainly to be this, *viz.* That *zeal*, as I before observed, is chiefly *seated* in the *passions* and affections of the soul, and is, properly speaking, the strength of our passions, or the *combining force* and power of them *all* together: So to be zealous for any cause, is only to be *passionately* concerned for it, which as it is very easy and natural, so it is a thing purely indifferent (as our passions are) and according as it is ordered, may be either a *virtue* or a *vice* in us. Whereas to make our *zeal* really good, to render it useful and serviceable to *religion*, all these passions must be *duly tempered*, and kept under a *regular* conduct, that there be no random efforts, nor extravagant sallies in any one of them, which is like breaking the ranks in time of battle, that turns all into disorder and confusion.

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AND as there is no one of our natural passions indulged to any considerable degree, but has *some* difficulty in the management of it, so the *government* of them *all put together*, and jointly conspiring in their *full force* (which is the *zeal* of a man) must needs be a very hard and hazardous task, and requires much care and caution to succeed well in it. When our passions are *highest*, they are then capable of producing the greatest and most *noble* effects, but are at the same time liable to the *most fatal* miscarriages, and our reason is never more in danger of being perverted, and born down by the insolence of them; and whenever this happens, as it too often does, 'tis no longer a *virtue* but the exorbitant *hurry* of some prevailing *passion*; 'tis no longer *religion*, but a *religious frenzy*; a presumptuous hope, *for instance*, or a superstitious fear, the dotage of love, or the rancour of hatred, which the *Apostle* calls a *bitter zeal*, none of which can be proper instruments to do service to *religion* by; For *the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of GOD.*

RELIGION must either *guide* our *zeal* and keep the balance of our passions even, or *zeal* will certainly *overturn religion*, and eat out the very vitals of it: 'Tis the best servant but the worst master that religion can possibly have. While *religion* steers the motion of our passions, *zeal* can do no hurt, 'twill do great and glorious things for *religion*; 'tis then a
fervour

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fervour of spirit properly *divine*; 'tis the strength and *beauty of holiness*, the most exalted pitch of a truly *Christian* courage and magnanimity; 'tis the *best* of every passion, the decent *harmony* of them all together raised and improved into a *constellation* of so many virtues in us. But when *zeal* breaks forth into excess and takes the government of *religion*, the whole character is then reversed, and two the best things in the world are quite spoiled, and made good for nothing.

MEN indeed may pretend, and some well-meaning persons are apt to think themselves then most of all to have a *zeal* of G O D, when they rage and storm most; but this is certain, that the *spirit of the LORD* dwelleth not in *whirlwinds* and tempests, and *religion* is always the sufferer, and in danger to be stifled in the *crowd* and tumult of our passions. 'Tis then but too often made by the *zealots* of all parties an empty pretence only, to give a sanctified gloss to the worst principles, and most wicked and destructive practices in the world. What St. *James* observes of an *unbridled tongue*, is the very case of an *ungoverned zeal*, 'tis a bare semblance only of piety, and the greatest piece of self-deceit imaginable. *If any man seem to be religious, and bridlet not his zeal, but deceiveth his own heart, that man's religion is vain.* And this brings me

II. SECONDLY, To enquire into the proper bounds and measures of our zeal, pursuant to what the *Apostle* here lays down, that it must be according to knowledge. They have, says he, (speaking of the *Jews*) a zeal of GOD, but, &c. οὐ καὶ ἐπίγνωσις, i. e. "not according to the plain and acknowledged principles of religion, to what they did, or might very easily know, to be the mind and will of GOD;" For they being ignorant (as it follows) of GOD's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of GOD.

THEY were grossly ignorant of the design of the Gospel, that it was not to destroy the law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them. Their zeal then for GOD, was the effect of their ignorance of GOD and his ways: 'Twas a blind resolution to maintain the doctrines they had received, a pride of heart to advance *Moses* above *Christ*, and their own traditions above the revealed will of GOD; so that instead of serving GOD by their zeal, they did him the greatest despite imaginable. Knowledge then is the first thing necessary in zeal, the fundamental rule of it in ourselves, and the proper test of judging of it in others. So that when we enquire concerning the value of our zeal, the question is not, how warm our passions are, or what godly pretences we make, but what it is that we know, what principles of truth and goodness

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nels we go upon; how conformable our pretences are to clear light, and the unerring precepts of *Christianity*. Men in this case are to be tried, as they are in all other professions whatsoever, not so much by the *confidence* of their undertakings, and the great *noise* they make, as by *rules of art* and the *skill* and understanding they have to *make good* what they pretend to. *Zeal* and *conscience* are indeed both of them very good things if they are found in the way of wisdom and righteousness, but fools and hypocrites are but too apt to play the *empiricks* with them, and vainly deceive both themselves and others.

BUT *knowledge* is a sure and *safe guide* to them both, which neither will nor can deceive us. If therefore men's knowledge in matters of *religion* be clear and solid, they have indeed a large scope for the exercise of their *zeal*, and may do it both with *safety* to themselves, and with great advantage to *religion*.

A CONSCIENCE rightly informed and a well proved *zeal* can never fail to do gloriously; 'tis the true *form of godliness*, with the *power* of it; the best management of the best cause in the world. But if men's *knowledge* be imperfect, and little, they would do well not to *outrun* their *guide*, but be *zealous* only according to that little; for *whatsoever is more than this cometh of evil*; since 'tis not of *knowledge* it must be of *ignorance*; it can only be of *passion*,

sion, which, blindly led, makes a mere mockery of all *religion*, and turns the best thing in the world into the very worst, into downright madness and *enthusiasm*.

IGNORANCE I confess may in some cases serve to extenuate the error of a well meant zeal, and make it *pardonable*; but 'tis *knowledge* only that can *justify* it, and give it the lustre and commendation of a really useful and steady *virtue* in us. It is well indeed for *religion*, that, in such an *age of infidelity* as this we live in, there are those yet to be found, that dare venture to be *religious*, that have the *knowledge* and *zeal* both to assert its honour, and maintain its *interests* in the world; but it would be much better still, if all that have *zeal*, had also the skill and *knowledge* to govern it; and if there was *more* knowledge or *less* zeal in the generality of its professors.

FOR how common a thing is it to observe among *Christians* of all sides, that the greatest *zealots* are generally the most remarkably defective in point of *knowledge*; that those very men who are the most vehement pretenders to godliness, and make the loudest cries for *purity* of *discipline*, for orthodoxy of faith, and for perfection of holiness; and who confidently set themselves up for *guides*, and lights, and instructors, and *reformers*; are, for the most part, themselves *notoriously ignorant*, *knowing* *neither what they say, nor whereof they as-*

SERMON *firm, and have need that one teach them again*
 III. *what be the first principles of the oracles of*
 GOD. And when *religion* falls into such hands, it is only to expose it, to put even its *friends* out of conceit with it, and provoke its *enemies* so much the more to blaspheme, and vilify it. It does therefore highly concern us to consider well of what sort our *zeal* is, before we suffer ourselves to be transported by it; that we don't mistake in the fundamental character of it, and call that a *zeal* of GOD which is the pure effect of our own conceited ignorance: For not being according to *knowledge*, it cannot really be of GOD, it can never do any good, it will most certainly put us upon doing a great deal of harm and mischief to the *cause* of GOD; and then let us flatter ourselves and others never so much, with the opinion of our own merit, and the great services we do *religion*, we shall never be able at last to answer to GOD and our conscience, for having been so *foolishly*, so outrageously *zealous*.

Now all the defects observable in our *zeal* in point of *knowledge* are plainly reducible to one or other of these two heads; either to a *wrong cause*, or a *wrong way* of managing a good one.

I. *First*, WHEN we mistake in the subject matter of our *zeal*, and call that the cause of GOD, which is none of his; or

2. *Secondly*,

2. *Secondly*, WHEN we exceed the proper limits of it in the use of *such* means, and by advancing it with *such* designs, as to ourselves, and upon *such* principles in regard to others, as are altogether unjustifiable. And therefore, to obviate all these mistakes, and that we may have clear and certain measures, whereby to distinguish between a true zeal and the false appearances of it, I shall briefly lay before you these following *rules*, every one of which is a *true mark*, and all of them put together make up a *complete* character of that *zeal* which is according to knowledge. SERMON III.

1. *First*, WE must be well assured of the nature of our *zeal*, that we are *zealously* affected in a *good* thing.

2. *Secondly*, THAT the way and manner in which we prosecute it, be always *good* and *lawful*, i. e. that it be duly circumstantiated in these three respects: 1st. In the application of fit and proper *means* in order to our *end*. 2^d. As to our intention, that the *grounds* and *motives* we act upon be *good* and justifiable. 3^d. That in promoting the cause of GOD, we keep within the compass of that *duty* which is plainly owing to our *neighbours*.

1. THE *First* instance then of a *zeal* according to knowledge, is, that the *subject* of it be a *good* thing, a cause *worthy* of our *zeal*, and *worthy* of GOD, that we contend for. And indeed this is so essential a *mark* of *true zeal*,

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that where it is wanting, all the rest are nothing worth; if we mistake in this we are *fundamentally ignorant*, and quite defeat the whole design we pretend to go upon. For as useful a thing as *zeal* is in a *good cause*, it has no such charm of goodness in it, as to consecrate a *bad* one; it was never designed to justify men's actions right or wrong; to *authorize* the follies, the vain hopes, the superstitious fears, the enthusiastick conceits, of men; and therefore if we will distinguish, it is the *matter* after all that must give denomination to our *zeal*, and shew of what sort it is, whether it be of GOD, or whether we speak and act of our *own selves*.

Now nothing can be a *fit* matter of our *zeal*, but what is a plain matter of *duty*: Some necessary doctrines and *fundamental articles* of *Faith*; something wherein the honour of GOD, and the interest of *religion* are more immediately concerned: For these are indeed good things, and *according to knowledge*, being manifestly according to *that rule* of all *knowledge*, and of all *duty*, the *mind* and *will* of GOD expressly declared in *Scripture*. And indeed it is a *rule* so clear and evident, that did men but attend to it, they could never be mistaken in the subject *matter* of their *zeal*, but would always choose out the best and fittest objects for the exercise of it. *If any man will do his will*, says our Saviour, *he shall know*

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know of the doctrine, whether it be of GOD*. It is no difficult piece of knowledge that is necessary in this case: A little consideration with common honesty and integrity will sufficiently direct us.

As to shew this in an instance or two: It is certainly a noble instance of our zeal, highly just, extremely necessary to stand up vigorously in defence of the being and providence of GOD, against bold and impious assertions of scoffers and Atheists; to vindicate the truth and divine authority of the holy Scriptures, against the pretended oracles of reason, the vile and rude aspersions of the Deists; to contend earnestly for the sacred mysteries of our faith, the faith which was once delivered to the saints, in opposition to the new and destructive schemes of the Arians and Socinians. And 'tis no less an object of our zeal to endeavour to preserve the peace, the unity, the decent order, the ancient and best established government of the Church, that schism and faction may be effectually convinced and discouraged; and if it be possible the Church of Christ delivered from the folly and malice of wicked and unreasonable men.

AND in matters of practice, how can we possibly employ our zeal better (especially in such an age of lewdness and impiety as we live in) than in labouring for the reformation of men's lives and manners, by pulling down the strong holds of vice and profaneness, and

* John vii. 17.

F 3

restor-

SERMON restoring the authority, and credit of decay'd
 III. virtue and piety in the world.

THESE, I say, and such like are undoubtedly most suitable subjects for the exercise of our *zeal*. And indeed if we have any *zeal* at all, any concern for truth and goodness, it must, it will shew itself upon such occasions.

BUT that is a very vain pretence to *knowledge*

1. *First*, WHEN men make *that* the matter of their *zeal*, which has *no foundation* at all, but in their own distempered fancies; when they furiously set up for new lights, and new discoveries in *religion*, in opposition to the known and stated rules of duty already revealed, and prescribed to them by the *Gospel*; for this is not to serve GOD, by their *zeal*, but themselves, in direct affront to GOD; to prefer the *empty conceits* of their own brains, before the *holy Scripture*, which contains that *good, and acceptable, and perfect will of GOD*. Such a *zeal* therefore can only be the effect of the greatest *pride of spirit*, and the most *sottish ignorance* imaginable.

2. *Secondly*, 'Tis no argument of men's *knowledge*, when their *zeal* spends itself *most* on such objects as need it *least*, and least of all deserve it. When they can contentedly pass by things necessary, and that are real instances of goodness, but vehemently contend for trifles, that are of no consideration nor consequence at all to *religion*; for this is fondly to suppose that *religion* was intended more for *shew* and amuse-

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amusement, than for any *real use* and excellency that there is in it; or as if GOD the blessed author of it was a Being better pleased with *pompous ceremonies*, and the mere formalities of worship, than with an *inward* and substantial righteousness, and the *weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith*. And therefore we find our *Saviour* charges such a *zeal* as this upon the *Jews*, as a piece of vile hypocrisy: that it was a *pharisaick* trick, only to keep a *form* of godliness, whilst they denied the *power* of it; a mere artifice to make *void the commandments* of GOD in the most solemn instances of duty, by their *own traditions*.

AND does not this charge fall every whit as heavy upon some *Christians*, as it ever did upon the *Jews*, (even upon *those Christians*, who to the reproach of Christianity, style themselves the *only true catholick Church of Christ*;) I mean, you know, the blind and furious *bigots* of the *church of Rome*, (*ad quos Pharisei collati, sinceri simplicesque queant videri*, as *Erasmus* has said long since of them, in his notes on the 23^d. of *St. Matthew*;) who by a foppish zeal for the wild and fruitless *excrescencies of religion*, have quite exhausted all the *spirit* of it, and almost killed morality at the very root.

FOR wherein is it that a good *catholick* is taught to express his *zeal* for GOD? Or in what lyes the merit of his devotion? Is it not in a long bead-roll of confused prayers, in formal penances, in a multitude of mas-

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ses and crossings, and sprinklings? Is it not in a vain worship of *images*, in kissing pictures and relicks, and in other such like idle *jopperies*? Is it not in a vagrant devotion, and foolish pilgrimages to prostrate themselves at the *shrine* of this or that other *wonder-working* saint, many of which never had any thing in them *praiseworthy*, and some of them never *any being* in nature? For these and *many other such like things they do*. What is the design of all this? why, only out of a pure *zeal* to supply all the *deficiencies* of *moral goodness*, and *expiate* all the sins of a *profane* and vicious life: and *thus it is that they make the commandments of GOD of none effect through their traditions*.

3. *Thirdly*, THAT *zeal* is most certainly not according to knowledge the matter of which is absolutely false: As when men advance those things for *necessary* points of *doctrine*, and *faith*, and *worship*, which are the pure *inventions* of men, and have no foundation at all in the word of GOD. Of this sort in great measure was the blind *zeal* of the *Jews*, which our *Apostle* here rejects, and for which our *Saviour* so often and so severely condemns the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, as the sole authors and promoters of it; who, by an arbitrary and usurpt authority of declaring what was *faith* and what *heresy*, grounded upon a pretence of an *infallible spirit*, and most flaming *zeal* for GOD and his laws, imposed things *perfectly new*, and of their own framing

framing upon the people, as of equal necessity with the word of GOD. Nay, in many cases, as our Saviour observes, to be preferred before it. So that out of pure zeal of GOD they rejected *his commandments* that they might hold their *own traditions*. The most vain and impudent pretence to religion imaginable. Well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, *this people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; but in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men* *. It might indeed have been hoped after so many woes denounced against such an ungodly zeal, that it would never have had the courage to appear more in the world, or at least, that *his Disciples* would never be the men that should revive it.

AND yet after all, there is a Church in the world, which pretends to be the truly primitive model of Christianity, that has ventured to copy so far after this wretched pattern, as quite to outdo the very original. For has not the Church of Rome, out of a pretended zeal for GOD's glory, boldly refined upon our Saviour and set up her own traditions, to be received and revered in equal degree with the holy Scripture? and is it not by virtue of these, that she has furnished the world with a plan of religion perfectly new; that she has pulled down and

* Matt. xv. 7, 8, 9.

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set up at pleasure, *taking from one divine institution, and adding to another, and entirely debauching the whole scheme of Christianity?* Upon these traditions it is, that she grounds her zeal for *purgatory*, and that heap of fopperies that attend it; for *Transubstantiation*, and the *Pope's Supremacy*, which *Bellarmino* in his zeal calls the sum of *Christian Religion*, because, forsooth, it is the *sum of Popery*.

UPON these is built her doctrine of *invoking* saints and angels, of *half-communion*, of *seven sacraments*, of *religious vows*, and *unintelligible prayers*, and the like; most of which are grossly superstitious, some sacrilegious, some idolatrous; some of which are a manifest reproach to our *faith*, others to our *reason*, and the plainest evidence of our *senses*; not one of which has any manner of foundation in the *holy Scripture*, and some of them are a downright contradiction to it. And therefore to what little purpose are they so exceeding zealous for these traditions, for *who has required them at their hands?*

WITH what little knowledge do they go about to set up *inquisitions* (the glorious invention of *St. Dominick*) to torture men's bodies, and much more their consciences; to disquiet families, and disturb the peace of whole states and kingdoms for the *conversion* of *Heretics?* or wherein lyes the merit of propagating such a *faith* as this, among the Infidels, to send men through *perils by land*, and *perils by water*,

to pervert the *Gospel* of *Christ*, and preach up another of their own devising? (such a *Gospel* for instance, as the “holy father *Xavier*, “that great Prophet and Apostle,” as he has been called, taught the poor *Indians*) a *Gospel*, I am sure, that has not *much more* of *Christ* in it, *much less* of common sense, and a *great deal more* of *cheat* and *fable* in it, than the very *Alcoran*.

THE Church of *Rome*, I confess, is very grateful in her returns for such signal services done to *GOD* and religion (as she calls it) by a solemn canonization of such *new Gospellers* as these; but if a *real* saint may be regarded against a *pretended* one, *St. Paul* more than once expressly denounces a curse upon either *angel* or *man*, who should preach any other *Gospel*, than what he preached unto them*. And our *Saviour*’s denunciation against the Scribes and Pharisees, may be, I fear, justly applied to many of these *blind zealots* the *Missionaries*. *Wo unto you* — for ye compass sea and land to make one *profelyte*, and when he is made ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves†. “You make *Christians* of the poor *Heathens*, only to involve them in a double guilt, that they may be more *superstitious* and more *idolatrous* than they were before. You give them just so much light into *Christianity*, as to make them abhor both it and you, and so they be-

* Gal. i. 8, 9. † Matth. xxiii. 15.

“ come

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“come worse men when *Christians*, than ever they were when *Infidels*.” Of this the *Spanish* conversions (as *Erasmus* tells us in the forementioned place) were, and the *Jesuitical* still are, a very lamentable proof. In short then, if our *zeal* be according to *knowledge*, it must be according to what is written, not according to the traditions of men; it must not be a zeal for *Jewish fables*, and men’s commandments that turn from the truth, but for *sound doctrine*, for the plain, pure, undefiled truths of the *Gospel*.

2. BUT secondly, as the matter of our *zeal* must be according to *knowledge*, so must the manner of it, be also. It is not enough that we have a good cause, unless we manage it in such ways and by such means, as are good and justifiable. Let our cause be never so right, an ill managed *zeal* will always be wrong, and instead of doing service, will be a disparagement to the best cause in the world. And therefore when we undertake to promote the interests of religion, we must be sure to do it in such ways as religion teaches, and are most for the honour and credit of it.

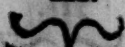
1. WE must defend truth only, and only by truth, and venture our cause fairly upon its own bottom, to stand or fall according to the innocency and evidence that is in it. For truth is always bold and generous, it is not ashamed nor afraid to appear above-board in the open light; there is always a naked simplicity, and an unaffected air of goodness that

that attends it, and distinguishes it from error and falshood ; and men that really love it, are so confident of its strength and power that they scorn to make use of *tricks* and *lies* to support it. Lies only want to be maintained by lies, but it is ridiculous folly to *lie* for the *truth*, because that stands firmest and is easiest defended upon its own *native innocence* ; and there can be no surer sign of a very weak, or a very unjust cause, than to see men forced to use *fraud*, and all the *little arts* of sophistry and dissimulation to uphold it. When men turn traders in *religion*, and make it their chief business to work upon the weakness and passions of their followers, by blinding their eyes with false principles, and illogical conclusions, with *specious stories*, for themselves, and *base calumnies* upon their adversary, it is very suspicious that there is no *truth* at the bottom, and it is a demonstration to a wise man that such men's *religion* is *vain*.

THIS is indeed a fault but too common among the blind zealots of all sects of religion: But above all the *Priests* of the *Church of Rome* are the most notoriously guilty in this respect. For we must needs do them this justice to own, that they are the great masters in this *noble science*, and have thoroughly studied all the cases, and nicely stated all the *little arts* and *subtilties* of *lying* and *equivocating*; and 'tis besides their peculiar talent to play upon the ignorance and credulity of the multitude,

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multitude, and to feed them with *feigned* miracles, and *fables*, and *legendary* stories, instead of truth. Now it is a very plain case to us, that there must be *falsehood* and *hypocrisy* in such a *zeal* as this; for truth and goodness never act on that fashion. *Truth* is too much a *plain dealer* to use little shifts and disguises, and is more a friend to the *Scriptures* than to decline being try'd by them; and our *Saviour* has instructed us plainly what judgment to make of such men. *Men*, says he, *love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.*

2. ANOTHER qualification of a *zeal according to knowledge*, is that it proceed from a good and *honest principle* within a man, that it be the effect of an undissembled piety, and a sincere intention of promoting the interests of goodness and truth in the world. Now this, though it be full as *necessary*, yet I confess it is not so *visible* a mark to distinguish men's *zeal* by, as the former, because it lyes mostly in their own breasts, and therefore, it is rather a *mark* for a man to know himself by, than a *rule* for us, whose judgment reaches no farther than the *surface* of things, and therefore must be determined by the *outward shew* and formality of men's actions, which are often so well counterfeited, that we cannot discover the truth and reality of their intentions. But after all, there are certain *rules* even in this case, whereby to distinguish a

true

true zeal from the *false* appearances of it; for the *tree will be known by its fruits*. Men cannot so artfully disguise their designs but that they will in some instances break through, and appear in the way and manner of their actings.

THUS when we see men's *zeal* in all parts *uniform* and impartial, when it lays no stress but on things that require it, and on some more and on some less, in proportion as they deserve it; when it bears an *equal* regard to all things of *equal* importance, and is concerned *most* for those that are *most* necessary, and of the greatest consequence to *religion*; when it has no *bias* upon it from worldly considerations, no *party* to serve, no *ambition* to gratify, no *self-interest* to promote by it; when it regards neither the *favours* nor the *frowns* of men, but charges equally through *honour* and *dishonour*, through *good report* and *evil report*, not caring what it gets or what it loses, or wherein it suffers, so that *Christ* be but glorified, and the honour of his *religion* vindicated and maintained in the world; such a *zeal* as this, I say, we cannot be mistaken in; that it is a *zeal* of *truth*, for truth's sake, out of pure love, and because 'tis the desire of a man's soul, since he has no other principle to be thus *zealous* upon, but because he loves the truth.

BUT on the contrary, when we see men manifestly twisting their *own interest* with the *interest of religion*; when they make *godly* prefaces, only to draw on the more smoothly
some

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some *selfish* design that lurks behind, and choose out or frame to themselves such particular instances of duty as are best suited to the purposes of ambition and covetousness, or to uphold the *interests* and reputation of a *party*, and care not what becomes of all the rest: When I say, they are for *godliness*, just when and where it is *gain* to them, and no longer, charity itself may venture *safely* to determine in such a case, that *such men's religion is vain*. For *true zeal*, as I said before, is all of a piece, and has an *equal* love and respect to all GOD's commandments. Thus for instance, when *Jehu* in the excess of his *zeal* slew all the Priests and the servants of *Baal*, as much as he then valued himself for his *zeal for the LORD*, the circumstances of the story, joined with the furious temper of the man, and the little *heed* he took to walk in the laws of GOD in other respects, plainly shewed that his chief design in this, was only the better to establish his new-gotten dominion, and ingratiate himself with the generality of the people, for he departed not from the *sins* of Jeroboam, but still left them their golden calves in Dan and Bethel*.

Thus again when St. Paul at *Ephesus* preached down the *Heathen* worship of images, saying, that *they be no Gods that are made with hands*. How wonderfully *zealous* do we find *Demetrius*, and the men of like occupation, in stirring up the people not to let the tem-

* 2 Kings x.

ple of the great Goddess Diana be despised, and her magnificence destroyed, when at the bottom it was not so much her honour, as their own interest they drove at; because all the hopes of their gain depended upon that great article; for by that craft they had their wealth. And till the Priests of the Church of Rome can give us a better reason of their image worship, and a more sensible account of their purgatory, what and where it is, and to what good and godly purposes it serves; they must give us leave to resolve the zeal that they have for them, only into their own interest; that in truth the treasure of their Church is hereby augmented, and by this craft they have their wealth.

THE like I might shew, had I time, in all the other articles of their new coined faith, particularly, in that great, that necessary article of *transubstantiation*; for as weakly as they are wont to argue in this matter, we never thought them such fools as to swallow absurdities, for the sake of them, or to believe that there was any *real merit*, or any benefit to religion, by quite overturning the *sense* and *reason* of mankind; but then we are tempted to think them so much the greater hypocrites, that they should thus presume to impose upon the world merely for their own honour, and for the esteem they expect from those who can swallow such a choking absurdity, and can believe a Priest able to make that GOD,

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who *first* made him. But let them impose upon ignorant people never so much with hard words, and juggling pretences, *GOD is not mocked*, and our *Saviour* marks out such *zealots* by the name of *hypocrites*, and declares that therefore they shall receive the greater damnation.

3. *Thirdly*, ANOTHER mark of a right managed *zeal*, is charity; for *charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not*, & ζηλοῖ, has no furious *zeal* in it, defends the truth by methods of *candor* and *civility*, by allowing for men's prejudices, and by using only *fair* and *gentle* means to convince them of their errors; letting them see that it is not any *hatred*, or ill-will to them, but *love* of truth, not the desire of *victory*, but to *gain a soul*, which is the only design it has upon them; and in this it is distinguished from the *zeal* of those men that have a bad design, and a bad cause to manage. For wherever *falsehood* and *error* is, there must be *rage* and *passion* to support it: what is wanting of *truth* must be supplied by *heat* and violence, and this naturally leads men to be malicious and *uncharitable*, to persecute and damn all that oppose them. And this may be observed in all the *schisms* and *heresies* that ever were in the world, particularly in the errors and corruptions of the *Church of Rome*.

THAT Church is manifestly the most corrupt, and the farthest gone from the truth of the Gospel, and purity of faith, of any *Church*

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in the *Christian world*; and therefore, (besides all other arguments against it,) we see that it is the most *passionately* uncharitable. It can have *no pity, no bowels of compassion*, either on the bodies or souls of men; but is all fire, and sword, and *damnation* to gainsayers. She pretends to destroy men's *bodies* out of mere love to their *souls*, and flings them quick into the flames for fear of shedding *Christian blood*. The most *Antichristian* charity, the most *hypocritical* and shameless *pretence* to mercy in the world! There may, 'tis likely, be some *policy* in such a cruel *zeal* as this, but there is no *meekness* of *wisdom* in it. And St. *James* plainly tells us that this wisdom *descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish*: The wisdom which is from above, is *first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated; full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality, without hypocrisy* *.

THE principal excellency of *Christianity* doubtless is to *improve* humanity, and provoke *good-will* among men, and not to inspire them with a greater *rage*, and a more hearty ill-will towards one another. Our *Saviour's* doctrine, his examples, his institution, his reproofs, his very design in coming into the world, all the *actions* of his *life*, and the *sufferings* of his *death*, do plainly declare this. And therefore when *Christians* make religion only an *engine* to supplant good-nature, and destroy humanity;

* James iii. 15, 17.

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when they feign to themselves such *notes* of a *true Church* as *Christ* never gave them, and blot out *charity*, that *old*, that *new*, that *only badge* of *Christianity*, there is perfectly an end of all religion: For indeed *Atheism* itself cannot do very much worse.

4. *Lastly*, If our *zeal* be according to *knowledge*, it must be *peaceable*. We have but very little of *religion*, if we think it will warrant us to fly in the face of *authority*, and raise seditions and foment rebellions; whereby the publick tranquillity and welfare of a nation is endangered for the propagation of it. This is, in truth, to make *religion* contradict itself, and the end it was designed for: Instead of being the support and security of government to be the chief instrument to overthrow and destroy it; 'tis to turn the *Gospel* of *peace* (which, as the Heathen historian *Ammianus Marcellinus* observes of it, *nil nisi justum suadet & lene*, is the justest and mildest institution that ever was) into a *bond* of *conspiracy*, and a foundation to justify all the treason and villainy in the world. And is not this the very case of the *Church* of *Rome*, in her way of defending and propagating the faith of *Christ*. That in a direct opposition to the mild and peaceable doctrine and example of our *blessed Saviour*, and his *Apostles*, pretends to advance *religion* upon such principles and by such practices as are absolutely destructive of the rights and *sovereignty* of *Princes*, and a manifest subversion of all *faith* and
friend-

friendship in human society: That would be thought to shew a zeal for GOD's glory by falsehood, and treachery; by secret plots, and open rebellion; by holy leagues, (as they call them) and holy inquisitions; by assassinating Princes, and massacring their subjects; by stabbing, poisoning, burning, that is in short, by all the wicked and *diabolical* ways that her dutiful sons [*zelo matris ecclesiae armati*] "armed with" the zeal of their holy mother, the Church," (as they express it) can invent. And for the better accomplishment of such horrid designs as these, she has intrusted the college called, *de propagandâ fide*, in the hands of the Jesuits, those enemies of all peace and righteousness, whose character we may read in the words of the Psalmist, *Corrupt are they, and become abominable in their doings; their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known; there is no fear of GOD before their eyes.* Men that in pure kindness to guilty consciences have distinguished away all that is called goodness; all that either Christianity, or even nature itself teaches of love to GOD, or good-will towards men: That by their subtle arts of equivocating, by their new invented doctrines of probability, and directing the intention, have smoothed the way for that wicked maxim to be the rule and stan-

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III.

dard of their actions. *Let us do evil that good may come.*

AN order of men which (as the *Sorbonnists* at first very justly observed) seems contrived not for *edification* but for *destruction*. Such a generation of *vipers* as even *Popery* itself is almost afraid of; that have made themselves *terrible* not only to *Protestant* Princes but to all the *governments*, and *governors* of the *Christian* world, and even unto the ends of the earth. For these men that have turned the world upside down are gone *thither* also; to the *Indians* of the *east* and the *west*, to teach them such lessons of perfidiousness, such horrid cruelties as *barbarity* itself never thought of, *untaught nature* stands amazed at. *But have they no knowledge that they are all such workers of mischief*, do they really think that *GOD* is such an one as *themselves*, that they have offered him nothing but the blood and lives of men for the space of two hundred years; i. e. ever since there was such an order in the world? Were they so stupidly *zealous* as to imagine, that the *Gospel* of *Christ* is best maintain'd by the rules of the *Alcoran*? That *Rome Catholick* is to have her foundation laid, as *Heathen Rome* is said to have been, in the blood and ruin of others? That *Christianity*, which at first spread itself over the world, by prayers and tears, by meekness, by goodness, by patience, (which is the *armour* of *GOD*) by cheerfully submitting to the rage and malice of its *persecutors*, should at last for
the

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the better propagating itself turn *persecutor*, should *kill* and *extirpate*, and that *Christians* too, and in ways *more* malicious, and *more* exquisitely cruel, than she ever felt from the very *Heathens*. SERMON
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BLESSED *Jesus*! thou *Prince of peace*, and *Saviour of the world*! thou best friend and greatest *lover* of mankind, that ever thy *Disciples* should think to please thee by acting directly contrary to thy precepts and example; that one design of thy coming among men should be to teach them how to dwell together in *love* and *unity*, and that *their* practice should be quite contrary, to hate, and *bite*, and *devour* one another? And this brings me in the

LAST PLACE, To shew the fatal effects and consequence of a *blind misguided zeal*. Now this indeed is a furious sort of wild-fire that has spread itself far and near in the world, and few *sects* in *religion* have ever failed to distinguish themselves very remarkably on this head. The instances are innumerable. I could lay before you a long lamentable account of this kind in the *Jewish zealots*, in the *Anabaptists* in *Germany*, in the *Puritans*, fifth *Monarchists*, and such like sectaries among *ourselves* and in *Scotland*.

BUT indeed in point of justice I owe it to the *Church of Rome*, not to let others share with her in *that glory* which she so highly merits and has made so peculiarly her own.

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She that has established those horrid practices upon *catholick principles*, which other blind zealots only did at random, and they knew not why! She that hath slain her thousands and ten thousands, and offered them upon the sacrifice and service of her faith! She that can shew antiquity on her side, and plead an uninterrupted prescription of above a thousand years, wherein she has exercised the accursed trade of *deposing* and *murdering crowned heads*, to the number of above thirty, as one of her own advocates [*Ab. Bzovius*] declares.

SHE that has so often signalized herself in Germany, in France, and in Great Britain, and in all the courts of the *Christian world*; that has filled so many calendars with martyrs to treason and rebellion; that has made panegyricks upon such execrable assassins as Frier Clement, and preferred his stabbing his lawful Sovereign to Judith's cutting off Holofernes's head.

THAT has made solemn processions and jubilees upon the *perfidious massacre* of above thirty thousand poor Protestants at once: who can be compared unto her? Who besides the instances named has added another; (the escape from which we commemorate at this time) the most infamous and villainous that *catholick cruelty* ever invented. Such a monster of conspiracy [as *Thuanus* their own historian calls it] such a mystery of iniquity, as nothing

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thing but the serpentine subtlety of *Jesuits* could invent; nothing could undertake to execute but a *zeal* that could in its rage set the world on fire, and was itself set on fire of hell. They have indeed of late years had the modesty to decline the glory of this day's *contrivance*, i. e. in truth they have ventured with an impudence, almost equal to that of the first attempt, to *outface* the world, and deny the plainest and most notorious fact that ever was, though they still adorn their calendar with the name of the *glorious* martyr St. *Garnett*; for so they are not ashamed to style that villainous *Jesuit* whose *curst* merit it was, by his own *confession*, to be the great *contriver* of this execrable design.

It was, I confess, such an accomplished piece of *villainy*, so *horrid* and *hellish* in all its circumstances, that it would much better have become the *Prince of darkness*, that *old serpent* and enemy of mankind, to invent and execute, than the *Disciples* of the *blessed Jesus*. But why should it be thought a thing incredible with us, that *Papists* should attempt it? 'Tis but one of a thousand instances that they have given us, both before and since, though not altogether so *Jesuitical*, yet full as *Popish*, that is as destructive of the welfare of mankind. *Cursed be their anger for it was fierce, and their wrath for it was cruel.* " May GOD for ever divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.

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“ May that Almighty Power and Goodness that
 “ has hitherto watched over us to do us good,
 “ evermore blast all the plots and designs of these
 “ sons of violence, and turn the counsels of
 “ all such *Achitophels* into foolishness; that
 “ all men may fear and declare the works
 “ of GOD, and wisely consider of his
 “ doings; whilst the LORD is known by
 “ the judgment which he executeth, and the
 “ wicked is snared in the work of his own
 “ hands.”

Now to the good and gracious Providence
 that hath hitherto preserved this Church and
 Nation, and hath appeared in so many wonder-
 ful instances to defeat the merciless designs
 of these our enemies; that did on *this day*
 save us by a mighty salvation (and again save
 us) to make it for ever *memorable* and pre-
 cious in our eyes, by a *double* deliverance;
 that has brought us out of *darkness into light*,
 and preserved us in that light; that has from
 time to time preserved us from the mischie-
 vous and fatal effects of a blind *zeal*, and
 taught us to add to our *zeal knowledge*; that
 has in his great goodness redeemed us from
Popish superstition, and in great mercy guard-
 ed us from *Popish* cruelty; To the King eter-
 nal, immortal, invisible, and only wise GOD,
 who has from age to age delivered us, and does
 deliver us, and we trust will deliver us, be all
 glory, and praise, and thanksgiving in all Churches
 of the saints throughout all ages, world without
 end. Amen.

SERMON

S E R M O N IV.

The Knowledge of GOD; how
the best Means of obtaining
eternal Life.

JOHN xvii. 3. former part.

*This is Life eternal that they might
know thee the only true GOD.*

IN treating upon these words of our SAVIOUR, **SERMON**
there will be the less need to consider what **IV.**
relation they have to the *context*; because
there is a plain and obvious meaning of them,
if we consider them *by themselves*. But nei-
ther shall I employ your present thoughts up-
on those arguments which are made use of
from this *text*, for and against the *Divinity*
of our *blessed Saviour*; because besides all this,
there is here such a *truth* delivered to us, as
if duly considered, may be of as much use and
advantage to us, as the nicest *criticisms*, or
most *curious* observations whatsoever can pos-
sibly

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IV.

sibly be. For our *Saviour* has here shewn us the most compendious method and the most effectual means imaginable for our obtaining everlasting happiness: 'Tis by the knowledge of GOD: *This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true GOD. To know GOD*, in the language of the holy *Scripture*, signifies, not only to have a due sense of GOD's being and perfections, but likewise to shew the sense that we have of them, by leading our lives answerably thereto in all holy conversation and godliness. It implies *obedience* to his laws; for the same reason that the *fear of GOD* is in *Scripture* often used for the keeping of his commandments. But because the expression in this sense is *figurative*, the *cause* being manifestly put for the *effect*, I shall at present restrain the sense of it to its most *simple* and *natural* signification. By the *knowledge* of GOD, I shall understand only the having *clear* and distinct apprehensions of the *nature* and *perfections* of GOD; the having no false unworthy notions of him; but that we think of him *rightly* and truly as he is in himself, and as he is in relation to us, and the rest of his creatures. And the design of my following discourse will be to shew you how our *eternal life* may be said to consist in such a knowledge of GOD. *This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true GOD.*

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THE *sum* of what I shall treat of from SERMON
IV.
these words of our *Saviour* is contained in
this proposition ; "THAT the having true and
" worthy notions of GOD and his perfec-
" tions, is the best means of securing to us
" eternal life and salvation."

I. FIRST, I shall endeavour to make out the
truth of this to you: And

II. SECONDLY, Shall draw some practical
inferences from it.

I. FIRST, I am to shew you how our hav-
ing true and worthy notions of GOD, may be
said to be the means of securing to us eter-
nal life and salvation. Now this it may be
said to be upon two accounts.

1. *First*, BECAUSE it is the *best means* where-
by we can come to the *knowledge* of our *duty*.
And

2. *Secondly*, BECAUSE it gives us the *best*
motives and encouragements to *perform* our
duty, when we do know it.

1. *First*, To have true and worthy notions
of GOD, may be said to be the best means of
procuring eternal life, because it is the best means
of coming to the *knowledge* of our *duty*.
The *duties of religion* are the *rule* that men
are to act by in order to please GOD. Now
it is impossible that any thing should please
GOD, but what is agreeable to his *nature* and
perfections; and therefore unless we know what
they

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they are, we can never know what those duties are, that will please him.

GOD is a Being that has ever from all eternity been infinitely happy ; he was fully and entirely so when there was no other being but himself, so that his infinite happiness is wholly and entirely owing to himself: His own *nature* and perfections being an eternal *inexhaustible* spring of delight and satisfaction to himself.

Now since all the possible grounds and reasons for infinite pleasure and happiness, are contained in the *nature* and *perfections* of GOD; it follows that nothing can any wise be pleasing and acceptable to him, any farther than as it is, some way or other, an *image* or similitude of his *nature*, or the *resemblance* and imitation of his perfections; for if any of our services that were distinct from these, and that were not thus qualified could please him, he could not be said to have all the grounds and reasons of an *infinite satisfaction* in himself, for he would want that *very reason*, for the sake of which, he accepted of and was pleased with our services.

Nothing therefore that we can do, even the very best of our services, can be upon any account any farther pleasing to GOD, than as it contains in it some of those reasons for which GOD is pleased, and satisfied with himself; that is, than as it does contain in it, in some measure, some of those *perfections*, which
are

are the foundation of his own *infinite happiness* in himself. So that the *nature and perfections of GOD*, are a certain *rule* and standard, both of what has been from all eternity, and what will be for ever acceptable and well pleasing to GOD. There cannot therefore be any better means of informing us how we may *please* GOD, than the knowledge of GOD, and the having *true* notions of his *perfections*: For how is it possible for us to be ignorant of what *will please* him, when we know what those things are which *have pleased* him for ever? 'Tis true indeed, GOD has given us an express *revelation* of his will, and therein told us what our *duty* is, and what will please him, and yet it is, notwithstanding this, necessary for us to have recourse to his *nature and perfections*, to understand his *will* after it is *revealed*; without a *right apprehension* of which, we shall neither know our *duty*, nor what will please GOD, altho' he has expressly told us both.

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For since, as I said before, nothing can be *pleasing* to GOD, but what does some way or other resemble his *perfections*, our obedience to the duties of *religion*, with which he has assured us that he is well pleased, must be an imitation of his *perfections*; and all those *graces* and virtues, which we are to acquire, and which are the main substantial parts of *religion*, can be nothing else but *transcripts* of the *Divine Nature*, its *perfections* copied out by us in our practice; and therefore as on the one hand,

hand, when we know what *moral perfections* are, we may infallibly conclude, that those *perfections* are infinitely in GOD; so on the other hand whatever *moral perfections* we know to be in GOD, we may assuredly conclude them to be so many patterns of *duty* in us, which according to the capacities of our nature we are to resemble him in. And though GOD has in a particular manner *revealed* to us in *Scripture* what those *moral duties* are which he expects, yet it is necessary that we have recourse to the divine perfections, for our understanding the *true nature* of them when they are revealed.

THUS for instance, GOD has commanded us to be *just* and *righteous*, to be *faithful* and *true*; and the reason of his commanding these things is because they are *divine perfections*; but now unless we know what the justice, and righteousness, and faith, and truth of GOD are, how will it be possible for us to imitate him in them, although he has enjoined them? Since the duties of *religion* are derived from the *perfections* of GOD, how can I understand the one unless I have a clear conception of the other? We are commanded too in *Scripture* to be merciful and *perfect*, as our Father which is in heaven is; but if we don't know what holiness, and mercy, and perfection in GOD are, how will it be possible for us in these respects to be *like* him: So that the nature and attributes of GOD are the best rule that we can go by, to understand the *true nature* of all those

moral

moral duties which are enjoined us in *Scripture*; and unless we have recourse to that rule, 'twill be a great chance if we don't err in our interpretation of them. Nay, this *knowledge of GOD* is not only necessary to understand our duty when it is *revealed*, but it is necessary likewise *antecedently* to all *revelation*; it is such a knowledge, without which, we should not have sufficient grounds to *believe* the *Scriptures* when they are delivered; but the *revelation* itself would be of no use, or benefit to us.

FOR unless we are first persuaded of the essential *goodness* of GOD, and his providence over us; how can we be assured that he would make any such *revelation* of his will to us? Or how can we be certain, that *that* which is *revealed*, is really his will, but by first knowing him to be a GOD of *truth*; and that he *cannot* deceive us, by telling us that such things are his will, when they are not so? Or supposing, that the *Scriptures*, when first revealed, were his will, yet how can we be satisfied that they do still continue to be so, but by knowing that he is *unalterable* in his *nature*, that there is in him *no variableness, nor shadow of turning*? Or what signify those *laws* which GOD has enjoined us in *Scripture*, unless we believe him to have a *right*, and authority, to *enact* them? Or lastly, what would all his *promises* and *threatnings* avail, unless we believe him *just* and *faithful*, that he will *really* execute as he has threatned, and re-

ward as he has promised? So that although GOD has *revealed* to us his will in the *Scriptures*; yet is the *knowledge* of his *nature* and *perfections* necessary in order to the *knowledge* of our *duty*, because without it we have no sufficient foundation for our believing the truth and *divine* authority of the *Scriptures*, after they are *revealed*.

BUT besides these *moral duties*, which I have been now speaking of, that have a *natural* and *intrinsic* goodness in them, as being founded in the *nature* and *perfections* of GOD, there are likewise many other laws enjoined in the *Gospel*, which are purely *positive*, that is such as owe their *whole force* to the command of GOD, without which, we should not have been obliged to obey them; such as the believing in *Christ*, and striking a *covenant* with him by *baptism*, and renewing of it at the *LORD's Supper*; the *avoiding* of schism, and the living in unity and *communion* with the true *Catholick Church*: All which may not perhaps so properly be called *religion* itself, as the *means* and instruments of it, they being such things as are not of themselves any ways acceptable to GOD, but as he has appointed them for *means* of making us holy, and like him, which is the only thing for which he can be *well pleased* with us: And these are however, as necessary in order to *holiness* and sanctification; as holiness and sanctification are in order to our *resembling* GOD, and being happy; and certainly 'tis this *knowledge* of GOD, we are speaking

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speaking of, that is the best and only *means* of enabling us to understand how to practise these *duties*, in such a manner as that we may obtain those benefits from them, which, according to the purpose of GOD, they were designed to confer on us. SERMON
W

THERE are many errors and mistakes, that men are apt to run into about the *positive duties* of religion. Some lay *too great* a stress upon them, and place too much holiness, and virtue in the exercise of them; and some on the other hand set *too little* a value upon them, as if they were of no use or benefit to us in order to our future happiness.

THE first are those that content themselves with these *outward ordinances* of religion only, and if they are but to any degree constant in their attendance on *prayer* and hearing the *word*, and receiving the *sacrament*; and if they now and then deny themselves in any innocent and allowable liberties, they think that this alone will entitle them to the character of *good Christians* and to the rewards of those that really are so.

THE *other* are a sort of men, who think themselves *above* all *ordinances*; who fancy they have *Christ* within them, and so that there is no need of *sacraments* or *outward ordinances*, whereby we may hold communion with him; or else that they are *predestinated* to eternal life, by an *irreversible decree*, and so shall attain it, whether they live in the exercise of the *publick offices* of religion or no; or else

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that these *positive* duties are such things as GOD does not strictly require our observance of, provided we do but take care of the more solid and substantial parts of *religion*: Or lastly, who think that the *peace* and unity of the *Church* is many times incompatible with the enjoyment of their *Christian liberty*: and that they can edify most in an obstinate course of *schism*, and separation from the *Catholick Church*.

Now had these men a true notion of GOD and his *perfections* they could never, *on the one hand*, make the *outward* observance of the ordinances of religion, to be the whole of religion; did they truly know what that holiness and justice, and mercy of GOD is, which we are to imitate they would never place *righteousness* in the observance of *positive institutions* only: they would find, that though, with the man in the Gospel, they should *fast twice in the week*, and *give tythes of all that they possess*, and be equally careful and exact, in all the other *rites* of religion; that though they did thus observe these *outward* forms of godliness, they might nevertheless be far from having any *sincere* religion, from being in any degree *holy*, as GOD is *holy*, or *merciful*, as our Father which is in heaven is *merciful*.

AND as odd, on the *other hand*, and unworthy of GOD, must their notions be, who think themselves *above ordinances*; and that there is no need of observing the *positive rites* and

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and *institutions of religion*: for how can they think rightly of the *absolute dominion* and power of GOD over them, when though he has enjoined these *positive laws*, they yet think themselves under no obligation to perform them? How could they entertain such notions of *Christian liberty*, as many of them do, if they did really believe GOD to be a GOD, *not of confusion, but of order, and peace in the Churches of the saints?* or how can they really think him to be infinitely wise, and knowing, who presume to use *other methods of worship*, than what he has prescribed; and who think they may attain to sufficient *perfection*, without ever using those *ordinances* which our *Saviour* has instituted as the *only and necessary* means of grace, and the *infallible* pledges to assure us of obtaining it?

So THAT men's not retaining GOD in a due manner in their knowledge, and their misapprehensions concerning him, are the cause of their misunderstanding the nature of these duties of *religion*; and the great reason why they are so often abused. And whilst men have these *wrong apprehensions* of GOD, they will necessarily be misled by them, in their notions of those *duties* which *he* has instituted as the means to enable us to do those things which will *please* him. For we shall always perform them in such a manner as we think is suitable to his *nature*; and therefore when we take *that* to be otherwise than it is, we

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must

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must necessarily think that we observe those duties, in a way agreeable thereunto, when it really is not so. But if we do *truly* apprehend, and *seriously* consider what kind of being GOD is, we cannot but learn from thence the true design of *these duties*, and the *manner* in which they are to be performed. We shall then see that as nothing can excuse us from an observance of these *duties*, so the main *end* of our performing them, is the improving us in *moral* goodness, and the making us more perfect in our *Christian* graces.

WE shall then evidently perceive that it is not enough to *believe* in *Jesus Christ*, and in the virtue of his *mediation*, or even to draw near to GOD in *prayer*, unless our natures are *sanctified* thereby * and our *hearts purified* †. That tho' nothing will excuse our neglect of being *baptized into the name of Jesus*, yet that this is not sufficient, unless we do likewise *die to sin*, and *walk in newness of life*. That the receiving the *communion* of the *body* and *blood* of our *Saviour* is necessary, but that we then only do it to a *true end*, and a good purpose, when we are thereby influenced, to *love* GOD and to be thankful to him, and *charitable* towards one another.

THAT though we are strictly required to *live in unity* with the *Church*, and not to se-

* Acts xxvi. 18.

† Acts xv. 9.

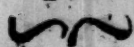
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parate nor slothfully absent ourselves from the *publick worship* of GOD; yet, we are to observe this, in order to our being *holy* in our conversation, and to become *zealous of good works*. In a word, if we do truly apprehend GOD as he is, we shall find, that tho' these *positive parts* of religion are our duty, and GOD by his sovereign authority does require them of us, yet the true nature and proper use of them is to improve and perfect our virtues; that they will be altogether insignificant, as to our future happiness, and the being acceptable to GOD, any farther than as they excite our *graces*, and inspire us with such *virtuous* resolutions, and lead us to such religious services as are suitable to the nature of GOD.

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I HAVE now done with the *first reason*, for which the *knowledge of GOD* may be said to be the means of *eternal life*: Namely, because it is the *best guide* to direct us to the *knowledge* of our duty, it is the *best rule* for us to have recourse to, to know *what will please GOD*. I come now to the *other reason*, wherefore

2. *Secondly*, THE *knowledge* of GOD is the best means of *eternal life*, as it gives us the best *motives* and encouragement to perform our *duty* when we know it. But before I enter upon this, (which I have not now time to go through with) I shall draw an *inference* or two, from what has been already said concern-



ing the usefulness and necessity of the knowledge of GOD, in order to the knowledge of our *duty*, and what will *please him*. And

1. *First*, FROM what has been said, we may learn a good and safe *rule*, to go by in our *reading the holy Scriptures*, to prevent our misinterpretation of them, that is, that we always interpret them so, that they may no ways contradict our *notions* of GOD, and his *perfections*. The *truths* of *Scripture* are not always delivered in the same manner and kind of expression; but *sometimes* they are wrapt up in *figures*, and at *other times* they are delivered plainly; *Sometimes* they are to be understood otherwise, than what the words they are exprest in do seem *originally* and *naturally* to imply; in *other* places they are to be taken *literally*. The difficulty in the case is rightly to distinguish when the one or the other method of interpretation is to be used.

Now when, according to the most obvious and usual acceptation of the words, they do infer any thing that derogates from the *perfections* of GOD, we may safely conclude that that is not the *true* meaning of them, but that they are capable of another, and *truer sense* than what the words do at first sight seem to import; For it is certain that *that* cannot be GOD's meaning in *Scripture*, which contradicts his nature; and let the expression seem never so plain and clear, I must conclude, that *that* cannot be the true meaning thereof,

thereof, because it is impossible that GOD SERMON
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should reveal any thing contrary to his *per-*
fections. To explain this by an instance or
two.

I. ALTHO' *human passions*, such as anger, jealousy, desire, repentance, grief, and the like are in *Scripture* frequently ascribed to GOD; and not only our *passions*, but the *outward parts* of human bodies also, as eyes, hands, and the like, we must not from hence conclude, [with the *Anthropomorphites* of old, and some sectaries of our own days] that these things are really in GOD, that he has any thing in him *material* as we have, or has the same *passions* with us; because this plainly derogates from his *perfections*; it takes away his *spirituality*, and denies his infinitely perfect happiness too; for a being cannot be so, that is subject to passions: And therefore let this opinion of theirs in *words* be never so clearly mentioned in *Scripture*, there can in *truth* and reality be no such thing intended by them, but they must be spoken only after *the manner of men*, by way of accommodation to our capacities, and we are thereby only taught that GOD does act in every case, where such properties and passions are ascribed to him, as are *merely human*, in a way *analogous* to what is found among men: so as to forbear and not execute his threats, when he is said to *repent*; to inflict *vengeance* with a heavy and strong arm, when he is said to punish in his *anger*;
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to spare no means useful for the reclaiming offenders, and rescuing them from destruction, when he is said *not to desire the death of a sinner, but rather to desire that he would turn from his sin and be saved.* All which may be easily conceived to be done without any degree of that *weakness* and *passion*, which does, and must accompany such kind of actions when performed by men.

2. THERE are some who pretend to believe that GOD has from all eternity *absolutely*, and irreversibly decreed, the everlasting *fate* of men's souls, without any regard to their works; and that tho' he has given them *laws* to go by, by obeying which, he has told them they shall be happy; yet he has resolved beforehand not to enable them to *obey* those *laws*, and yet because they do *not* obey, will torment them forever.

Now tho' there should be never so many particular *texts* of *Scripture*, that may seem to favour this doctrine, yet we may be certain, that the *spirit* of GOD, never intended any such thing from them, because it is so directly contrary to the agreed notions of GOD's *goodness* and justice that he should reward and punish men without any regard to their actions; and that he should bid them endeavour to *do* those things which should make them happy, and yet at the same time be resolved they should *not* do them.

THIS, I say, is so contrary to our common notions of GOD's *goodness* and *mercy*; nay, and of his *justice* too, that let men pretend to prove it never so clearly, they must be in the wrong, and we have all the reason in the world to think them so; because GOD can never *reveal* any thing of himself *contrary* to his *perfections*; and because every one has a clearer and more *demonstrable* certainty that these notions are contrary to his *perfections*, than they can have of their understanding those *texts* of *Scripture* aright, in which they think those notions are contained. For it is possible, that after all, they may be deceived in their *interpretation* of the *texts* of *Scripture*, they may be ignorant of the true force and natural import of the *original* words, which may refer to some antient opinions now unknown; or they may not have duly considered the *contexts*, and compared them with the main scope and general design of the *holy Scriptures*. I say, it is possible for men, upon these accounts, to be mistaken in their *interpretation* of a *doubtful text*; but it is impossible that GOD should be otherwise than *good* and *merciful*, or that any thing should be true that contradicts his *perfections*.

AND therefore, if in our searching into, and reading the *Scriptures*, we would keep close to this *rule*, we should find it a great help to us to prevent our falling into error; and though it might not perhaps, in some places

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places help us to the *right* understanding of them, 'twould however be a great means of keeping us from understanding them *amiss*; 'twould teach us to *suspend* our judgments many times, and be contented to be *ignorant* of the *true* meaning of them, rather than out of a desire of knowing *all* things, understand them in such a sense, as does an injury to the *attributes* of GOD.

2. FROM what has been said, may be inferred, the necessity that there is of establishing in our minds clear and distinct notions of GOD, and his perfections. For 'tis plainly as necessary as it is to know our duty clearly, the not doing of which, must make us err many times about the performance of it. For since the knowledge of our *duty* does depend so much upon our knowledge of GOD; the clearer our apprehensions are of *the one*, the clearer in proportion will our knowledge be of *the other*.

Now the means of having these clear apprehensions concerning GOD, are, by *first* knowing what true *perfection* is, and then ascribing all *possible degrees* and measures of it to GOD. And this is such a kind of knowledge as every one, if he will, may attain to; for the notions of perfection are implanted in our nature, and riveted into our very beings; and nothing that is a *real perfection* can be proposed to the mind of a man of *common* understanding, but he will at first fight per-

ceive and apprehend it to be a *perfection*: There is no one, who, if it were proposed to him, whether *goodness*, and *power*, and *wisdom*, and *justice*, and *mercy* were *perfections*: I say, there is no one, that should have it proposed to him, whether these things are *perfections* or no, but would immediately, and at first sight, perceive and acknowledge them to be such: There is a *native* beauty and excellency in them that cannot be hid. If we would therefore but cast our eyes round us, and observe those various, and obvious *perfections*, which GOD has scattered abroad in the world, and imprinted upon the several parts of his creation; what can be more easy than to conceive them all united together *infinitely* in one being? And yet this is the truest and most distinct notion that we can have of GOD.

HENCE it appears, where the fault of those men lyes, that are many times ignorant, and most times confused in their notions of the plainest, and most substantial parts of *religion*; it is their having confused and indistinct notions of GOD himself. And it likewise shews us, how much they are to be blamed on this account; for it is plain, that *that* notion of GOD that is *easiest* to be understood, and that agrees most with the common sense and reason of mankind, is the *truest*; and therefore it can be nothing but their thoughtlessness and inattention, that is the cause either of their ignorance, or confusion about it.

What

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What remains then, but that from the consideration of the various usefulness and great necessity of *this knowledge*, we be persuaded to endeavour after it; that we seriously set ourselves to the study of GOD's *nature*, and to a true conception of his *perfections*? And this methinks we should be persuaded to, not only from the *pleasure* of it, as it is in general the knowledge of truth, but likewise from its excellencies also, it being the knowledge of the very best of Beings. It is a *knowledge* that will fill the soul and adorn our nature; a knowledge whereby we may be instructed how to resemble GOD, and partake of his *excellency*; a knowledge that will infuse the purest delight to the mind, and most grateful satisfaction to our hearts, even a knowledge that teaches how to please *him* infallibly, on whom our *eternal* fate, or our *everlasting* well or ill being depends.

Now to GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY GHOST, THREE Persons and ONE GOD, be ascribed, as is most due, all honour and glory, praise, might, majesty and dominion, both now and evermore.
Amen.

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SERMON. V.

The Knowledge of GOD how
the best Means of obtaining
eternal Life.

JOHN xvii. 3. former part.

*This is Life eternal, that they might
know thee the only true GOD.*

IN treating lately upon these words of our SERMON
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blest Saviour I observed to you, that to
know GOD, in the language of the *holy*
Scriptures signifies not only to have a due sense
of GOD's *being* and *perfections*, but likewise
to shew the sense we have of them by leading
our lives answerably thereunto in all holy con-
versation and godliness. That it implies *obe-*
dience to his laws, for the same reason that
the *fear* of GOD is often used in *Scripture*
for the keeping his *commandments*. But that,
because the expression in this sense is *figurative*,
I should restrain the sense of it to its most *na-*
tural

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tural signification: And that by the knowledge of GOD I should understand only the having clear and distinct apprehensions of the *nature* and *perfections* of GOD; the having no *unworthy notions* of him, but that we think *rightly* of him, as he is in himself, and as he is in relation to us and the rest of his creatures. And I farther told you that the design of my discourse upon these words, was to shew you how our *eternal life* may be said to consist in such a *knowledge* of GOD, and then to draw some *practical inferences* from the doctrine.

I. *First*, I undertook to shew you how our having true and worthy notions of GOD may be said to be the means of securing to us eternal life. Now this I told you, it may be said to be upon two accounts.

I. FIRST, Because it is the *best means* whereby we can come to the *knowledge* of our duty. And

II. SECONDLY, Because it gives us the *best motives* and encouragements to *perform* our *duty* when we do know it.

I HAVE already dispatched the *first* of these and have drawn the proper *inferences* from it. I proceed now to the *second*. Wherefore,

II. SECONDLY, Another reason why *eternal life* is declared to be the effect of the *knowledge of GOD* is because the knowledge of
GOD

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GOD is the best means of exciting us to the practice of our duty when we do know it. SERMON V.

THE *only means* that can be afforded us to do our duty, when we are once thoroughly acquainted with it, is, the having such arguments laid before us, as are apt to *move* and raise our *passions*, and thereby influence our wills and put us upon action. For 'tis the property of a *moral agent* to be acted upon by *argument* and *persuasion*; and wherever there is *virtue* in any actions, they must be under the direction of a free choice, and they must be performed by the influence of *reason*, and moral arguments. Fair *motives* must be proposed, and the compliance with, or rejection of them, must be left to the agent's own judgment.

THAT therefore must be the most likely to excite us to religious actions, that is most fruitful of these kind of *arguments*, that are best able to raise our *passions* and put us upon action. Now there is nothing so every way fitly contrived to do this, as a contemplation of the nature and perfections of GOD. For every *attribute* of GOD, when rightly considered, is both a *reason*, or foundation of some duty, and a *motive* to practise it; and the difference that there is between men, as to their particular tempers and inclinations, cannot be so great, but that there will be something in the nature and perfections of GOD,

SERMON that is peculiarly fit, and of direct power to
V. move and affect them.

So THAT, whether a man's *natural constitution* and temper disposes him to be influenced most-ly by *hope*, or by *fear*; by *shame*, or by *love*; or by any other prevailing *passion* within him, he may always find an *attribute* or perfecti-on in GOD: His *Al-sufficiency*, his *goodness*, his *justice*, his *mercy*, *beneficence*, or the like, that is naturally apt to produce *that* passion in him. And then being all of them *bound-les* and *infinite*, they must have all the force and efficacy imaginable to determine us. And what can there be conceived better or more likely to move us than this? For, in one word, it is the having an *infinite reason* applied to *that passion*, that is *naturally* apt to be excited by it, and which, when it is excited, is *naturally* apt to influence and to determine the whole man.

AND 'tis certainly upon the account of the real force and efficacy that there is in these kind of *mo-tives*, that they are so often made use of in *Script-ure* to excite men to their duty. For thus, how often, even in almost every *page* of the *bible*, do we find mention made of the *power*, and *goodness*, and *justice* of GOD; of his being able *to save* and *to destroy* to the uttermost; of his being *full of compassion*, tenderly merciful, long-suffering, and of great pity; of his hatred of sin, and of his resolution of not clearing the guilty: I say, how very often do we find mention made in *Script-ure*

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ture of these *perfections* of GOD? And for this very reason, that we may be influenced by them to *repentance* and *obedience*: Nay, I may add, that the *attributes* and *perfections* of GOD are not only the most frequent, but indeed the *only motives* to holiness of life, that the *Scriptures* contain. For though we are often *there* dissuaded from a course of sin, by the *threatnings* of both temporal and eternal evils, and are invited to holiness and obedience, by the offers and promises both of the good things of this life, and of that which is to come; yet it is plain that neither these, nor indeed any *promises* or *threats* whatsoever, can influence us as such, but only, as we believe *him* to be *faithful* and sincere that has thus promised and threatned, and that he is *able* to perform and execute them accordingly.

If a man be moved to perform his duty, upon the account of *temporal* goods and evils, it must be, because he is fully persuaded of a just and good *providence*, that will take care to make things *work together for good* to them that fear him, and for *the hurt* of those that disobey him. Nay, if *heaven* or *hell* hath either of them any influence upon him, it must be because he believes GOD to be so *faithful* and *just*, as that he will infallibly reward where he has promised, and will punish where he has threatned to do so. So that the *attributes* of GOD are the foundation

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dation of all *religious* motives and persuasions whatsoever: They are the very means which the wisdom of GOD itself has made use of to excite us to our *duty*, and consequently they must be in their own nature the most *kindly* inducements, the most *prevailing* arguments, that can possibly be proposed to the mind of man to make him perform it.

'Tis therefore, you see, with very great reason, that our *Saviour* in the *text* has placed *eternal life* in the *knowledge* of GOD; for it teaches us what will please GOD, and at the same time very powerfully moves us to practise it; which, if it be not eternal life *itself*, is however the *earnest* and infallible pledge of it. Because he that suffers himself to be guided by the influence of those *motives*, can never fail of obtaining it.

BUT when I call the knowledge of GOD the *best means* of both knowing our duty, and bringing us to the practice of it, I would not be understood to speak exclusively of the assistance and operation of the *Holy Spirit* of GOD. For after all, it is the *Holy Ghost*, who directs us to the *means* of happiness, and who sanctifies both us and *them*; at once prepares our hearts for the reception of a true and useful knowledge, and gives a due weight and energy to the several *religious motives* that are laid before us. So that even this knowledge of GOD itself, the great importance of which, we are representing, is *a means* to save us,

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us, altogether through the help of his *spirit*, and the quickening power of his *grace*. SERMON V.

THE *inferences* that I shall draw from this head shall be these two,

1. *First*, THAT we ought to be constant and diligent in reading of the *holy Scriptures*, and in seriously reflecting, and meditating upon those discoveries which GOD has therein made of himself.

2. *Secondly*, THAT the *true cause* why so many men live in a neglect of their duty, and take no care of obeying the *laws* of that *religion* they profess to be of, is, either their not retaining GOD in their thoughts, or their thinking amiss of his *perfections*.

1. *First*, WE ought to be constant and diligent in reading of the *holy Scriptures*, and should seriously reflect and meditate upon the discoveries which GOD has therein made of himself. And this is necessary, because *here* alone it is where we can attain to that knowledge of GOD, that is so necessary in order to our *eternal life*. It being the *Scripture* only that gives us that clear and excellent character of GOD, that is sufficient to engage us in the practice of our duty. For though a man, by the bare help of *natural reason*, may be able to attain such a true notion of GOD, as might be a sufficient foundation, on which he might build the necessity and obligation of *moral* duties, yet it is the peculiar excellency of the *Scripture* to give us that account of GOD, as may sufficiently influence us to the practice of those

duties, in that manner which is expected from us under the *Gospel*.

WE have *there* not only all possible perfections ascribed to GOD, but we have likewise the *nature* of those perfections illustrated and explained to us, in such instances as mere *natural* reason could never have thought of. We are told not only what he is in himself, but what he is likewise in relation to us. Thus *it* declares him to be not only *merciful* in his own nature, but shews us likewise *wherein* he is so to us; to wit, in being *careful* of our good, notwithstanding our provocations towards him, in being *compassionate* of our evils, and in being ready and willing to redress them. *It* not only tells us that he is *wise* and *just*, but *it* commends and *glorifies* those excellencies to us, in the discovery it makes us of the *unsearchableness* of his counsels, and the admirable methods of his *providence*. And as *it* declares him to be infinitely *good*, and a GOD of *love*; so does it undeniably prove him to be so, in that glorious instance it gives us of his mercy and compassion to us, in the sending of his *Son*, for the discovery of his will, and to make *satisfaction* for our sins. All which are such clear and evident tokens of the *perfections* of GOD, as, if duly considered, cannot fail of convincing our understandings, commanding our assents, and influencing our practice.

AND this is sufficient to recommend carefulness and constancy in our reading the ho-
ly

ly *Scriptures*, in which these great discoveries of GOD are made to us. And he that does thus, and thereby fixes in his mind those clear notions of GOD, and his *perfections*, which are *there* plainly revealed, will quickly find himself under the influence of the best arguments, the most *prevailing motives* imaginable, to perform his duty. There is indeed nothing that mere *natural reason* discovers of GOD, but what is full of persuasion; but there is a kind of a constraining force in his *perfections*, as the *Scripture* represents them to us: they will by a kind of *moral* violence conquer us, if we do but attend to them seriously, believe them heartily, and receive them as the absolute rule both of our faith and manners; they will then captivate our understandings to the *obedience* of *faith* in spite of the opposition, and reluctance and perverseness of our *natures*.

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So THAT when once we have thoroughly instructed ourselves out of the *Scriptures*, with the *true* notions of GOD, we shall not need to seek abroad for arguments to keep us to our duty, or to strengthen us against temptations, for we shall have the whole *armour* of GOD in our own bosoms; the *best* and most *powerful* arguments in the world will be so fixed in our minds, that, through the *grace* of GOD, they will be continually inclining our *wills* and *affections* with the most kindly inducements to piety and virtue. So that which way soever we turn our thoughts, we



shall immediately see an invincible reason to *trust* in GOD, and to *fear* him; to *love* him, to *worship* him, and *obey* him with chearfulness and constancy. For we shall plainly perceive, that in every instance of duty we act with the greatest reason, and serve the *best Master* in the world.

2. *Secondly*, FROM what has been said, we may gather what is the true cause why so many men live in a neglect of their duty, and take no care of obeying the *laws* of that *religion* which they profess themselves to be of: And that is either their not *retaining* GOD in their thoughts, or else their thinking amiss of his *perfections*.

THIS, I believe, must seem to many to be a *heavy* charge, a *very hard saying*; because there is nothing that can commonly be charged upon them more unexpectedly than this, nothing that they can less bear to be thought guilty of. And yet, when one considers the wide difference that there is between their *profession* and their *practice*, between what they acknowledge ought to be done, and what really is done by them, there is great reason to think either that GOD is not in all their thoughts, or else that they have very wrong apprehensions concerning him.

FOR a man cannot act contrary to that which he sees a plain reason for the doing of, but he must be *uneasy* in his mind for it; it is a pain to the soul of any one to oppose a *clear* conviction;

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viction; and therefore when we see men live at ease, and contentedly, under the neglect of those things, which the *perfections* of GOD do naturally move and persuade them to, it must be either because they do not duly consider them, or else because they represent GOD to their minds under such a *character* as will justify them in their wicked courses, and make their sins sit easy upon them.

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I. THUS for *instance*, There are some who acknowledge *repentance* and *obedience* to be necessary conditions of their *future* happiness; but they think any time soon enough to begin the performing of them; they know it to be an express declaration in *Scripture*, that *without holiness no man shall see the LORD*, and yet they hope that a few *faint wishes*, and dying prayers, will, through the intercession of their *Saviour*, serve as well, and bring them as securely to heaven. But can such men have any true notion of the *wisdom* of GOD, when they thus think, that he has enjoined a body of laws, which they need not observe? Can they look upon him as a *prudent* Governor, when they suppose him thus to have commanded us to be *obedient*, and yet to be well pleased with us at last, if we are *not*? The principle that they go upon, is the infinite *mercy* of GOD; but do they think *worthily* of that *mercy*, when they thus think that it is a security to them, tho' they live in their sins, and that it is a sufficient foundation for a wicked life, and

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and for deferring *repentance*? Do they not plainly look upon it under the notion of a *blindpity*, or *effeminate easiness* and tenderness of nature, when they do thus believe him to have such a fondness for us, and our good, that he will accept of any thing as a condition of *salvation*, any thing that we *ourselves* think reasonable and sufficient, rather than use any *severity* for our not performing those things which he *himself* has required? And that rather than we shall fall short of heaven, the *very* sacrifice of our *Saviour*, which was designed to *purify* us from all uncleanness, shall be sufficient to make him accept of us, though we continue under our defilements still?

THEY therefore that allow the *necessity* of *repentance* and *obedience*, and yet are backward in the performing of them, must, you see, have either no thoughts at all of GOD's *perfections*, or else, such as are very *false* and unworthy of him.

2. AND so must *they* likewise, who, when they acknowledge the *Gospel* to be the *rule* of their duty, yet excuse themselves from living up to its sacred rules upon the account of the *fancied difficulties* of them. I call them *fancied difficulties*, because there is not really that hardship in them which they pretend. But such enemies are many men to their own happiness, that when they are loth to do any thing which they are convinced ought to be done, they'll be raising *scruples* about it, and fancy such difficulties

culties

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culties in it, as they are not able to overcome : **SERMON**
They find themselves, on a sudden, weak and im- **V.**
potent creatures, and encompassed with infirmi-
ties; and the duties, on the other hand, appear ve-
ry *hard* and troublesome; that so they may the
better excuse themselves from the *practice* of
them. But this is a notion as false as GOD is true;
and argues a very great ignorance of his na-
ture.

FOR how can they be said to think *rightly*, of
the *absolute dominion* of GOD; when they thus
think him capable of imposing unreasonable
laws on his subjects, as he must have done
if the *laws* that he has imposed are *impracticable*?
What strange notions must they have of the
goodness of GOD, when they make him pro-
mise us happiness, on such conditions only as
we cannot perform; and of his *justice*, when
they suppose him to punish us for those things
which we could not avoid?

2. ANOTHER *instance* is that of those, who,
though they acknowledge the *obligations* of
religion, can nevertheless live contentedly in an
almost continued neglect or abuse of his sacred
ordinances and institutions; that is, that do upon
every *trifling* occasion absent themselves from
the public prayers and worship of GOD, or
else do perform those duties to no good pur-
pose when they do come. For can they have
any true thoughts of the perfections of GOD,
that think almost *every trifle* to be a sufficient
excuse for their not waiting upon him? Does
he



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he think truly of the *absolute right* or sovereignty that GOD has over him, that prefers *worldly business* before the *service* of GOD, and that thinks he may neglect GOD's *publick honour*, for his own *private concerns*? Has he any thoughts of GOD as his *truest* friend, and *best* benefactor, - that will not pay him any acknowledgment for his mercies? Or has he worthy thoughts of him that pays him those acknowledgments, in such a manner, as is indecent and unbecoming of him; who is *irreverent* in his behaviour towards GOD, at the same time that he pretends to be *adoring* him? Can you think that GOD is immediately present in our assemblies; that he is in the midst of us when we are met together? Do you think this of GOD, and yet be idly discoursing with your neighbours, instead of *supplicating* that Majesty you are before? Or could any one be listless enough to give himself up to *sleep*, or be quite careless of *decency* in *posture* and deportment, when he is actually addressing himself for pardon and succour at the *throne* of GOD, if he did indeed consider any thing of his *nature*, and had any awe and dread of his *power* and glory? Do you forget yourself in like manner, when duty or curiosity leads you into the presence of your *Prince*? Do you sollicite his favour without observing common *rules* of *civility*, and good manners? Or are you negligent of the approved methods of testifying due respect to

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any persons your *superiors*, unless it is your avowed intention to *affront* your betters? How then is it possible for you to shew the *indignity* you are guilty of towards GOD in this kind, if you did indeed think of him as he is, and were affected with the thought in the manner you ought?

3. *A Third instance*, of the want of a due consideration of the perfections of GOD is seen in those who believe the *strange* doctrine of *Attrition* maintained by the Church of Rome.

The *Romanists* affirm, "That sorrow alone for the sins a man has committed, though the mere effect of the fear of punishment, and attended neither with the *love* of GOD above all things, nor with the *love* of our neighbour as ourselves, will however suffice for justification and salvation, if what is called the *sacrament* of *penance* be performed;" that is, if a *confession* of all his sins be made to a *Priest*, and *Absolution* be obtained*.

WHAT a contradiction is this *device* to plain Scripture, and common sense! Certainly nothing but an insatiable thirst after wealth and power, could have led men into such an *absurdity*, whilst they profess the belief of the existence of a GOD of infinite *perfection*. For his purity, justice and wisdom do absolutely forbid the possibility of *its* being agreeable to his mind, or to any œconomy of salvation established by him.

* See *sacrament of penance* in Rom. catechism.

FOR



FOR does not this pretended *doctrine* plainly lay a foundation for *security* in the practice of vice and debauchery? May not a sinner be ready to *speake peace* to his soul even in the midst of his mad courses, who has such an anchor as this for the support of his *hopes*? For upon the supposed truth of this *expedient* there seems to be but one chance against the salvation of any man of the *Roman* persuasion, and that is his being snatched away on the sudden without any notice of the near approach of death; for this *scheme* requires no long time for execution.

IF the sinner be but sensible of his state, so far as to be sorry for the *danger* of it, and resolved, tho' merely through *fear* of damnation, to change his life and manners, if indulged with time for it, and does also confess his sins to a *Priest*, and receive absolution, he will (if this *scheme* be well grounded) as assuredly find mercy as he *hopes* for it: And accordingly tho' a child of the *devil*, all the time of his health and vigor, may in an hour or two in the *extremes* of life at once commence a *child* of GOD, and acquire a sure title to the joys of *heaven*.

HOWEVER then the *Church* of *Rome* may vaunt herself upon a pretended strictness in the matter of *righteousness* and good works, 'Tis plain this *fancy*, if really believed, must unhinge all *morality*, and introduce every kind of licentious living. And who then, that seriously

ously contemplates the *moral attributes* of GOD, can, for a moment, entertain a thought of his having established *a rule* in order to the salvation of men, so manifestly *destructive* of goodness and purity among them? Who, that has any right notion of the *truth* or the *wisdom* of GOD, can imagine that he that has required *holiness*, as an indispensable condition of salvation, almost in every page of the *bible*, should yet allow an *expedient* to take place, that does so directly contravene this his declared purpose, of bringing men to heaven by the *practice* of *virtue* and righteousness.

NEAR of kin to this *doctrine* is that of some *Protestants*, who, whilst they pretend to more *purity* than ordinary, have professed, that "the *faith* which justifies *Christians*, is only "an *affiance* or trust in *Christ*, and in the "merit of his life and death for our sakes; "so that a strong persuasion of being one of "those, to whom the merits of *Christ* have "been, in the eternal purpose of GOD, applied, is the *only condition* of every man's "pardon and salvation. For that *Christ's* obedience is by imputation *ours*, and his righteousness *ours*, and accordingly, that a life "of holiness, and purity, and virtue is needless with regard to salvation, or as a necessary means for retaining GOD's favour, or "finally securing our happiness."

THERE are many men, who in the rage of their *zeal* against the absurd doctrine of *merit* and

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and *supererogation*, in the matter of *good works*, have run into this equally *shameless* and *dangerous* error. An error which, if believed to be true by those who profess it, must probably produce very terrible effects. For, under such a persuasion, no man could be withheld by any principles of *religion*, from the most *profligate* and most licentious practices.

AND is not this alone an argument sufficient to shew the impossibility of such a doctrine? For GOD *cannot deny himself*. He can never have established a method of conveying pardon and salvation inconsistent with his own *attributes* and perfections. As sure therefore as *he* is holy, just, and good, so certain is it, that whatever fancy some men may have grounded upon a few obscure or figurative expressions of *Scripture*, it is impossible in the nature of things that such a *doctrine* should be true, and consequently it can have no place *therein*.

FOR what wise Governor, Parent, or Master ever received their Subjects, Children, or Servants into favour, without some tokens of *penitence*, and promises, at least, of *amendment* and obedience? Shall an *obstinate* offender be intitled to acceptance, merely upon a rash confidence of his being a *favourite*, and *one* in whom no faults will bespy'd? Such a method of dealing with offenders would be looked upon as an untowardly proof of *wisdom* in an *earthly* Governor; and can any one who conceives

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right of the *adorable* perfections of GOD, suppose any thing parallel, or like to this can be the *rule* of his dealing with mankind in the grand concern of *religion* and *eternal life*?

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If a man was to make the experiment of converting a Heathen to the faith of *Christ*, and at the same time avow this *principle* as taught in the *Gospel*, and as necessary to be believed, certainly he would soon find himself unable to stand his ground, and that he must either *quit* his *principle*, or wave the contest, for he could never maintain any *scheme* of *religion* whatsoever, as of Divine appointment, in defiance of what, in the sense of all men, is an undoubted attribute of the Divine Nature.

4. ANOTHER instance, and the last I shall mention, of the like inattention to the *nature* of GOD, may be observed in those, who, whilst they acknowledge the *holy Scripture* to be the only *rule* of *faith* and *manners*, do yet obstinately insist, that the doctrine of *Christ's satisfaction* for the sins of the world, by the *sacrifice* of himself, in our *stead*, is not taught therein. I am afraid the true ground of this absurd assertion is laid in the *low* and mean opinion they have of the *authority* of the *holy Scriptures*.

BUT if they do really believe them to be, in any sound and just sense, the *oracles* of GOD, they cannot have right notions of his *wisdom* and *goodness*, whilst they thus suppose *him* to have given the *Scriptures* for the direction of

our understandings concerning the *author*, the *means*, and the *manner* of the *redemption* of mankind, and yet to suppose them capable of exhibiting a doctrine not only flatly contrary to the plain, direct, and natural construction of the language of *Scripture*, in numberless instances, but to the *analogy* of *faith* also, and to the universal sense of the Christian Church down to the times of *Socinus*.

I WOULD fain know, upon the supposition of its being true, that *Christ* did make *satisfaction* to the *justice* of GOD for the sins of men, by the *sacrifice* of himself in our stead, and for our sakes; which way the point could have been expressed more directly, more clearly, or in a manner more level to the understandings of men than it now is. And, if the word *satisfaction* had itself been used in this case, whether the arts of evasion, whereby the *Socinians* seek to rob so many other expressions of their true and natural meaning, might not have been of as much force with regard to *this* word, as to any *other*.

WHAT honourable notions then can men have of the *author* of *writings* which they thus suppose calculated rather to lead men into error, in a most fundamental point too, than to teach them the truths of *Christianity*? For the point in question affects the whole *Christian scheme*, and according as it is either received or rejected, the intire catalogue of *orthodox doctrines* is confirmed, or reversed; and consequently,

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frequently, if the *Church* is under a mistake in this point, every thing is *unravelled*, and we have the whole of *Christianity* to learn again. Is it then at all consistent with the wisdom and goodness of GOD, to have given us a *rule* for the sure direction of *Christians* in a matter of so much consequence, which, if understood according to all approved methods of *interpretation*, must defeat the design of its being given, and lead men into mistake?

FOR 'tis certain, honest men, of plain common understanding, can never think otherwise, but that what is, with one constant tenor, in the most *direct* and *open* manner taught, in the sacred writings, must be the sense of the *Author* of them; and that every *doctrine* that is contrary thereto, with whatever *confidence* advanced, and with whatever art and subtilty defended, cannot be the *truth as it is in Jesus*.

So THAT upon the whole, the truth of the *merit* and *efficacy* of *Christ's* sacrifice and satisfaction for sin, upon the supposition of the *Scriptures* being the very word of GOD, stands upon the same foot of certainty, that the plainest doctrines of *morality* do; namely, upon the immoveable *basis* of the divine attributes of *wisdom* and *goodness*; forasmuch as it is utterly inconsistent with them both, that GOD should give us a *rule* for our instruction, that must unavoidably prove a *snare* to us; or, which is the same thing, that he should give us a *rule* for

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our instruction, in all matters pertaining to salvation, and that the method of understanding it should be just contrary to all the usual, rational, and approved *rules of interpretation*, and so should, by a kind of necessity, lead the most modest and best disposed *Christians* into mistakes in matters of the greatest importance.

Now to GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY GHOST, THREE persons and ONE ever blessed GOD, be ascribed all honour and praise, the kingdom, power and glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

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SERMON VI.

The Manifestation of GOD in the Flesh.

1 TIM. iii. 16.

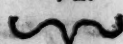
*And without controversy, great is the
Mystery of Godliness: GOD was
manifest in the Flesh.*

WE being on this day, by GOD's mercy, SERMON
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met together, to commemorate that
miracle of kindness and love to man-
kind, which he was pleased to shew in the in-
carnation of his Son our LORD and SAVIOUR
Jesus Christ, the great *Author and Finisher* of
our faith: I think we cannot employ ourselves
more suitably to the joyful occasion of this
solemnity, than by making this great mystery
of godliness the subject of our serious medi-
tation; that by thinking of it as we ought,
we may thereby be brought, through GOD's
assistance, to act as becomes those for whose
pardon and *salvation* GOD has been pleased
to provide by so amazing an instance of con-
descension,

descension, and by a method so very *awful* and *affecting*.

THE words of the text, which I have now read to you, do expressly assert that great *article* of our *religion*, which is the subject of this day's *praises* and *thanksgivings*. That it was GOD who was, as on this day, *manifest in the flesh*; or who *appeared* in our *nature*. And if there was no other evidence of the truth of this *doctrine* of the *incarnation* of the Son of GOD, but what these words afford, we could hardly be in any doubt about the certainty of it. And it is for this reason that I have pitched upon them, to introduce my intended discourse upon this subject: Though I hope to make it appear, in the course of my argument, that this *passage* of *Scripture* is but *one* of a great many, that do most plainly assert this great and *momentous* truth.

THE whole verse of which my text is a part, runs thus: *Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; GOD was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. Without controversy; that is, there can be no question, but the mystery of godliness is great; there can be no doubt, but the Gospel of salvation does discover very surprizing, and important truths: The chief and most fundamental points of which are these; That GOD was manifest in the flesh, justified in, or by the spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed*
on



on in the world, received up into glory. All these several articles are so eminently true, in the person of our Saviour, and the meaning of them is so unnatural and inconsistent, when applied to any other subject, that if we consider them impartially and without prejudice, we cannot but perceive, that it is *he* alone of whom the *Apostle* is here speaking; that *he* is the GOD of whom it is here said, that he *was manifest*, or, *manifested*, [*ἐφανερώθη*] in the flesh, and justified in the spirit.

THE whole scheme of Christianity shews us evidently, how all these propositions, in the verse of the text, are literally to be applied to our Saviour; for *without controversy*, he did appear in the world in our human nature, and in our flesh did *manifest*, and shew himself unto men, and he was *justified* and proved to be that very *Messiah* that he pretended to be, by the Spirit or *Holy Ghost*, working miracles, in *Christ's* name, by the hands of the *Apostles*; that he was likewise *seen of angels*; for they worshipped him at his first entrance into the world, and ministred to him, in the *desert*, and in his *agonies*; and were present with him at his *resurrection*, and attended him at his *ascension*, and the history of the Gospel evidently shews, that he was *preached to the Gentiles*, and *believed on in the world*, and was *received up into glory*, being taken up into heaven, and placed there at the right hand of the *Majesty of GOD*.

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'TIS without controversy too, that *that Person, or Being*, which the *Apostle* at first says, was *manifest in the flesh*, is the very same, who, as he says afterwards, was *taken up into glory*; which expression is so harsh and unnatural, when applied as it is, by some men, to the *Gospel* of our *LORD*, and not to our *Saviour himself*, that I think there will be no need of troubling you with a particular confutation of the reason they give for it. For what sense is there in saying that it is the *Gospel* which the *Apostle* says here, was *received up into glory*? Or what mystery of religion would he have herein discovered to us, if he had said, and meant so? I shall only observe to you, that they who would persuade us, that the *Apostle* is here speaking only of the *Gospel* of *Christ*, and not of *Christ himself*, are forced to support their opinion, by changing the *original words* of the *text*, and reading them in a different way from what they are found to be in a manner in all the *Greek copies*, and in a sense contrary to the *generality* of the *antient translators*, and all the *antient Greek scholiasts* *. And moreover, in a sense so *strained* and *unnatural*, that no one can persuade himself could be the meaning of the *inspired penman*, who believes at the same time, that he writ, to be understood, and for the *general instruction* of the *Church*.

* See *Pearson* upon the Creed. 2d. Article. *Mills in Locum*.

WITHOUT detaining you then by a particular confutation of what, when proposed even to the best advantage, sufficiently confutes itself; I shall understand the words with the best and most *orthodox interpreters*, as spoken concerning our blessed *Saviour*; and as the last mentioned instances of the *mystery of godliness*, are what the *Socinians* themselves will allow, may be spoken of him, so will I now proceed to shew the *first* instance to be equally applicable to him, and that *he* is indeed GOD-MAN, or GOD manifested in the flesh.

TO THIS end I will,

I. FIRST, Shew that our Saviour *Jesus Christ*, who is here said to be GOD manifest in the flesh, is TRULY and ESSENTIALLY GOD.

II. SECONDLY, Lay before you the manner in which we are to understand this great *mystery* of the incarnation of the Son of GOD; and then,

III. THIRDLY and LASTLY, Draw such *inferences* as may be useful towards our spiritual improvement.

I. FIRST, I am to shew you that our Saviour *Jesus Christ*, who is here said to be GOD manifest in the flesh, is TRULY and ESSENTIALLY GOD. For the proof of this,

I. First, I WILL argue from those *passages* of Scripture, wherein he is styled GOD in the



the highest, and most absolute, and *emphatical* sense of that word.

2. *Secondly*, FROM those texts wherein it is affirmed, that *all things were made by him*.

3. *Thirdly*, FROM those places of Scripture, wherein the highest perfection of *wisdom* is ascribed to him. And

4. *Fourthly*, FROM those places wherein *divine honours* are commanded to be paid to him.

1. *First*, LET us attend to those passages of Scripture, wherein our Saviour *Jesus Christ* is styled GOD, and see what evidence will thence arise of the truth and reality of his divine nature. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with GOD, and the Word was GOD. The same was in the beginning with GOD*, Of whom Christ came, who is over all GOD blessed for ever †. The glorious appearing of the great GOD, and our Saviour Jesus Christ §; that is, of the great GOD who is our Saviour. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O GOD, is for ever and ever ‡. Hereby perceive we the love of GOD, because he laid down his life for us. This is the true GOD and eternal life ||.*

THAT our Saviour is in all these places and many more *emphatically* styled GOD is sufficiently plain, and the *Arians* do themselves acknowledge that they are therefore a just proof of his *Divinity*, in the sense of his being a very high and

* John i. 1. † Rom. ix. 5. § Tit. ii. 13. ‡ Heb. i. 8.
|| John iii. 16, 20, 21.

eminent person, as to his excellencies and his office, and greatly superior to all other created beings. But surely this is infinitely short of the truth, and these passages will amount to a proof of his being not *nominally* only, but *truly* and *essentially* GOD. For since the *Scriptures* were given for our instruction, and are not of any private interpretation, we must understand them as we do other writings; that is, in their plain and natural sense, unless the reason of the thing, or the analogy of faith, or some uncommon circumstances of the context, require the contrary.

AND if this rule be not observed there can be no ground of certainty about the meaning of any expressions whatsoever: For nothing can be declared in so *explicite* terms, as not to be capable of being misapplied by the *artifice* of cunning men. If we have no rule in the case, but the confidence of man is to pass for a ground of doubt and scruple in the most obvious points, we are sunk at once into the very depth of *Scepticism* and *Infidelity*.

SINCE therefore the title of GOD is given promiscuously to the Father and the Son, and that in very many, and very remarkable instances, and no intimation is at any time given therewith, of its being ascribed to them, with any difference of meaning, no caution laid down to prevent our running into any mistake in the matter; I think there can be no possible rule of judgment concerning any doctrine, or any

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any expression of Scripture whatsoever, if we must not infer from this communion of names a communion of nature also; if we are not right in asserting that the Son must be of the same nature with GOD the Father, to whom the same names of GOD, the GREAT GOD, and THE ONLY TRUE GOD, are applied.

2. Secondly, I SHALL prove the Divinity of our blessed LORD from those places of the holy Scriptures, wherein he is declared to be the Creator of all things. *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made* *. Nothing can be devised more direct to this point, or more expressive of the Son's efficiency in the creation of the world, and all things therein, than this passage is. It is first positively averred, that all things were made by him, and lest the meaning of this revelation, plain as it is, might be mistaken; lest any subtilty might be invented to evade the force of it, the Evangelist adds, that WITHOUT HIM there was not any thing made that was made.

AND agreeably to this does the Apostle St. Paul tell the Colossians, that BY HIM were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible, and invisible, whether they be thrones, or principalities or powers; all things were CREATED BY HIM, and FOR HIM; and he is BEFORE all things, and BY HIM all things consist†. This is a passage most full to our purpose, in

* John i. 3.

† Col. i. 16, 17.

as much as the *creation* of all things is here ascribed to the Son of GOD in terms as plain and as particular, as is well possible: 'Tis here said, that *by him* were all things in *heaven* made, as well as those upon *earth*, not the *visible* things only, but what are *invisible* also, not only *human souls*, but *angelick spirits* also, whether they be *thrones* or *principalities* or *powers*. Neither is it only said of him, that he is the *Creator* of ALL THINGS, but that they were also all created FOR HIM; that the *end* of their being made was his *glory*, and moreover, that as he is thus *before* all things, so is he also the support of all things; he *by whom* all things *consist*, by whom they are continued in being, preserved in all their properties and powers, are made useful either to themselves or others, in that *rank* or order wherein his *Providence* has placed them.

I SHALL mention but one place more, and that is, *Thou, LORD, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands; they shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up and they shall be changed, but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail* *. This passage is taken out of the 102^d Psalm †, and is applied to our blessed LORD, in the self-same terms in which it is spoken

* Heb. i. 10.

† Ver. 25, &c.

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by the *Psalmist*, of the LORD *Jehovah*, the GOD of *Israel*; and here it is said of *Christ* as there it is said of *JEHOVAH*, that in the beginning he laid the foundation of the earth, and that the heavens are the works of his hands.

WHOEVER therefore after a serious perusal of this passage, shall either by the *Socinian* or *Arian* artifices endeavour to evacuate the force of it, may shew his craft and subtilty, but can never deserve the character of an impartial reasoner. But now as the several passages, last cited and explained, do expressly assert the fact of our LORD's creation of all things, so is it to me most evident, that the truth of that fact does necessarily infer the reality of his Divine Nature. For what can be plainer than that eternal duration, and infinite power, and wisdom can belong to GOD only, and are such properties as can in no sense be ascribed to a creature. But these must both be found in our LORD, if he be the Creator of all things.

I. FOR first, as to the eternity of his duration: This must certainly follow from what is now supposed of his being the *Author of all things*, visible and invisible; because that Being, which made every thing which was made, could not be itself a creature, unless we can suppose, what is on all hands allowed to be impossible, that any being should be the author and maker of itself. But what was never created could not have had a beginning, and must therefore

therefore have existed before all ages or from SERMON
all eternity. VI.

2. AND *secondly*, as the Sovereign Creator of all things must have been *before* all things, so must he also have been possessed of *infinite* power and wisdom. For what less than that can be supposed to have made all things out of nothing, to have given life and being to what had neither before, and that not to the inhabitants of this earth only, but to the *armies* of *heaven* also, to *thrones*, *principalities*, and *powers*? Whatsoever has been observed by naturalists of the marks of *wisdom* and contrivance, or of greatness and *power*, in the several parts of the creation, and all the arguments that have been from thence taken for the proof of a GOD and a *providence*, to the confusion of *Atheists* and unbelievers, are of the same weight, in proof of the point in hand [that *Christ* our Saviour is *very* GOD of *very* GOD, and of the *same substance* with the *Father*.] Since we are certain from the authority of the *holy Scriptures*, that all these things are the *works* of his hands, and the effects of his wisdom and power.

Now as the *reason* of all men concludes for the *infinite power* and *Godhead* of the great Creator of all things, so do the *holy Scriptures* every where represent the power of *creation*, as the *incontestable attribute* of the *Godhead*. Indeed the work of *creation* is, throughout the whole *Bible*, laid down as the
3 certain

certain *character* of the true GOD in opposition to, and distinction from the *pretended* gods of the *Heathens*, and is urged as the reason for entertaining the highest possible conceptions of his glory and excellency, and as the ground of the most exalted acts of *adoration* and *worship*.—The LORD is great and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD MADE THE HEAVENS*.

IN the solemn and religious confession which the *Levites* made after their return from the *Babylonish* captivity, recorded by *Nehemiah*, we have these words. *Blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise; thou, even thou art LORD alone*; then follows the reason; *Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all †. The gods that have not made the heavens, and the earth, they shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens: HE hath made the earth by his power, HE hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion ‡. St. Paul, in his sermon to the *Athenians*, argues in like manner, for the worship of GOD alone, from this *topick* of the *creation*, in these words: GOD that made the world, and all*

* Pſal. xcvi. 4, 5. † Nehem. ix. 6. ‡ Jer. x. 11, 12.

things therein, seeing he is LORD of heaven, and earth,—and giveth to all life and breath, and all things, and bath made of one blood all nations of men.—They should seek the LORD*.

Now from these passages and many more that might be added, we may observe that a very particular weight is laid upon the consideration of GOD's being the *Creator* of the world and all things, as a reason for our addresses to him; and that his *title* to the adoration and fear, subjection and obedience of men is emphatically grounded upon *this relation*. How it is the chief *character* whereby he is distinguished from the *false* pretended gods of the *Heathens*; how men are stirred up to the highest degree of *reverence* and veneration for him, from his having thus formed all things by his *Almighty Power*. It is farther observable, that his title of *Creator* is always spoken of in the loftiest style, and with the greatest pomp of expression, as the most *eminent* of his attributes, as comprehending every perfection, and as the chief and most lovely character of the *Godhead*. Now can all this be so, and the *Creator* be after all of an *inferior* nature to the *supreme GOD*? It is not possible.

SINCE therefore the *holy Scriptures* from beginning to end, describe the true GOD under the title of *Creator* of the *universe*, and since the same *holy Scriptures*, in the plainest terms,

* Acts xvii. 24, 25, 26, 27.

affirm the *Son* of GOD our *Lord* and *Saviour* JESUS CHRIST, to be the *Creator* and *Upholder* of all things, it can be nothing less than obstinacy, and a *fanatical* perverseness that can withhold men from seeing the truth of the conclusion, that he is therefore *the true GOD and eternal Life*.

4. PROCEED we now to the *fourth* proof of the *Divinity* of our *LORD* from those passages of *holy Scripture*, which ascribe to him the *Divine Perfection* of *infinite wisdom* and *knowledge*. Now not to mention those *texts* wherein the intire communication of all perfections from the *Father* to the *Son* is affirmed; as when it is said of him that he is the *brightness of his Father's glory*, and *the express image of his person*; and that in him dwelt *the fulness of the Godhead bodily*. And that *all things that the Father hath are his*, and that *what things soever the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise*.

NOT, I say, to insist upon these and many other such *passages* wherein a full and complete communication of all the *Divine Perfections* is declared; I shall urge such as particularly ascribe this *Divine Attribute* of *absolute* and *unerring wisdom* to the *Son of GOD*.—
The word of GOD is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of *the thoughts and intents of the heart*. Neither is there

there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked, and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do *.

Now whether we understand the former part of this passage, of the eternal *Word* of GOD, the second person of the ever blessed *Trinity* (which is the most natural construction) or of the *Gospel* of *Christ*, of which mention is made in the 2^d verse of this *chapter*; 'tis certain what is said in the 13th verse must be understood of him, that *there is not any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do*. And which way can *Omniscience* be ascribed to a Being in terms more *emphatical*? And where, in the whole *Bible*, is the infinite *knowledge* of GOD the *Father* laid down more fully and expressly? And agreeably to this assertion of the *Author* of this *epistle* is that *confession* of *St. Peter*, after our *LORD*'s resurrection.—*LORD thou knowest all things* †.—And of all the *Disciples* just before he was betrayed. *Now are we sure that thou knowest all things* ‡.—For the *Apostles* not being corrected by our *Saviour* for thus ascribing to him an *incommunicable* attribute of the *Godhead*, is an evident proof of their having right notions of his *dignity*, since it is not conceivable how he should suffer them thus to *honour* him, even as they *honoured*

* Heb. iv. 12, 13. † John xxi. 17. ‡ John xvi. 30.

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the *Father*, if he was not *indeed* possessed of that most glorious excellency and perfection which they ascribe unto him.

As THESE passages do directly set forth the *Omniscience* of the *Son* of GOD, so there are others that by just consequence ascribe the same perfection to him, although not in direct terms. Such are all those places where he is said to *know the hearts of all men* §. *I am he*, says our LORD of himself, *that searcheth the reins and the heart* *. St. *John* says of him, *that he knew all men; and knew what was in man* †. For to *know the hearts of all men*, is the property of *Omniscience*, and an excellency that is declared in the *holy Scriptures* to be the distinguishing attribute of the *true GOD*; Thus, *I the LORD search the hearts, I try the reins* ‡. And, *Thou, even thou ONLY knowest the hearts of all the children of men* ||. So that this perfection being in *one* place declared to be the *incommunicable* attribute of GOD, and in *others* expressly ascribed to the *Son*, in the self-same terms, in which it is ascribed to the *Father*, nothing seems more necessary than to conclude with the *Catholick Church*, that he who is thus possessed of a distinguishing *Character* of the *Godhead* must himself be truly and *essentially* GOD.

THERE is nothing that can, with any shew of reason, be objected to this, but what is grounded upon that famous *passage* of *holy Scrip-*

§ Rev. ii. 23. * John ii. 24. † John ii. 25. ‡ Jer. xvii. 10. || 1 Kings viii. 39.

ture, where our blessed Saviour himself declares, that *that day* [that is the day of judgment] *knoweth no man, no not the Angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father* *.

The *Arians* contend from hence, that whatever is elsewhere said of the excellency of our LORD's *knowledge*, and however it may be ascribed to him in terms of the same import, with those by which the *Omniscience* of GOD the *Father* is described, yet that they must be understood with some abatement, and as importing a *finite knowledge* only, since it is here directly and in the plainest terms asserted, that as neither *angels*, nor *men*, know the precise time of the last judgment, so *neither* does the *Son* himself *but the Father*; or [as it is in St. *Matthew*] *but the Father only* †. But to this it has been answered by some that the *ὁ υἱός*, the *Son* here, is the *Christ*, the *Messiah*, the *Servant* and *Messenger* of GOD, who came into the world as his *Prophet* to reveal his will to mankind. And that as such, he might be very well said not to know, what he had no *commission* nor *authority* to discover. That since it was no part of his *message* to make known to the sons of men, the time and season when the *great* and dreadful *day* of *accounts* should come, he might, with propriety enough, be said not to know it at all.

BUT the answer of others is more satisfactory, which is to this effect: That it is not

* Mark xiii. 32: † Matt. xxiv. 36.

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said that the *Son of GOD* was ignorant of the time of the general judgment, but the *Son of MAN*; and that there being a *real* and essential difference between his *Divine Nature* and his *Human*, he might be said to be ignorant in regard to *one* nature, of what he had a perfect knowledge in respect of the *other*; so that altho' he *knew all things* as *GOD*, yet as *man* he had the *infirmity* of other men, of being *ignorant* of *some* things; that as he *increased in wisdom* as well as in *stature* or *age*, so he acquired greater degrees of it, according as the *holy Spirit* communicated himself unto him. And that this is agreeable to what he said of *his speaking nothing of himself*, and that *the doctrine was not his, but his that sent him*; and that the *Father shewed him all that he did*.

AND therefore, that although, as *GOD*, he *knew all things* without exception, yet as *MAN*, he was really unacquainted with the *day* and *hour* of the general judgment. The *Spirit* of *GOD* that resided in him, not having imparted *that secret* to him.

AND what is objected to this explication that our *Saviour* could not, with sincerity, say he was *ignorant* of any thing of which he had, as *GOD*, a *certain knowledge*, is unreasonable, and without ground; because the properties of both *Natures* subsisting in him, they must all alike be affirmed of him; and accordingly it might with truth be said, that in different respects, he *knew all things*, and yet was ignorant

ignorant of *some*; as Son of GOD all things were *naked* and *open to him*, as Son of man, he knew not the time of the general judgment.

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AND this is agreeable to his manner of speaking of himself under those different capacities at other times. *Now I am no more in the world**, says he, and yet 'tis certain, as the divine *Word*, the Son of GOD, he could not at any time be excluded from the world. *Ye have the poor always with you*, says he, *but me ye have not always*†. In those words he denies that he should any longer give his Disciples the comfort of his presence, which was true with regard to his *bodily* presence, but as GOD he promised afterwards to be always present with them; *Lo*, says he, *I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world*‡. So that our Saviour might, with great truth and sincerity, deny that in *one* respect and under *one* consideration which he could not have denied in *another*. And this may suffice in answer to what the enemies of our LORD's Divinity have urged, in derogation of his Omniscience from the passage of Scripture now explained. I should now proceed to another argument in proof of the point I have been hitherto maintaining, but I shall wave that for the present, and draw a short inference from what has been already said, suitable to the present season, which is this:

* John xvii. 11. † Matt. xxvi. 11. ‡ Matt. xxviii. 20.

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SINCE the person whose *incarnation* we now commemorate, is really *divine*, GOD of GOD, and very GOD, we ought with the utmost zeal and diligence to endeavour to make our most sincere acknowledgments for so amazing an instance of his love to us in thus condescending to take *human nature* upon him with all its weaknesses and imperfections, sin only excepted, for our help and rescue. How ought our hearts to glow with love and devotion towards a Being, that has given so superlative a proof of his care and tenderness for us!

BLESSED LORD! that thou shouldst condescend to cover the unspeakable glories and perfections of thy *Divine Nature* with a *vail of Flesh*, that thou mightest discover to us, poor misled and mistaken mortals, the will of the great GOD, and the way how we may *acceptably* worship him, and thereby may attain peace and comfort here, and be rewarded hereafter, with joys *unspeakable* and *full of glory*! LORD, *what is man that thou shouldst so visit him, or the son of man that thou shouldst so regard him!* Certainly the consideration of this marvelous condescension of our GOD and *Saviour*, ought to excite us to a most regular discharge of our duty. If GOD so loved us as to take our nature upon him, that he might teach us our duty; how can we be so ungrateful to him, as well as injurious to ourselves as not to practise it? If GOD so loved us as to

clothe

clothe himself with flesh, that by dying in our stead, he might *merit* happiness for us, we certainly ought to make the best return we can for such a miracle of love, and as at all times, so particularly at *this season*, to give *glory* to GOD for it.

AND as this cannot be done but by a careful and punctual *obedience*, so especially should not his *last* and *dying* command be neglected of receiving the blessed *sacrament* of the LORD's *supper*, in commemoration of what he did and suffered for us. And methinks we should not be backward in doing what will, if done as it ought to be, be so infinitely our benefit and advantage. For this *holy sacrament*, does not only set before us, in the most endearing manner, the *infinite love* of *Christ* in dying for us, but it assures to us the *pardon* of our sins, the *assistance* of GOD's grace, and all the other blessings which he has obtained for us by the *merit* of his sufferings: and upon a *due* participation of the sacred *mysteries*, we have all reasonable grounds to hope for such succours of GOD's grace, as will support us in our conflict with the temptations of the *world*, the *flesh*, and the *devil*, and make us more than conquerors, by establishing us in our resolutions against falling back into our former course of sin and folly, and enabling us in all things to *do* GOD's will and *obey* his commandments.

AND

AND the best *preparation* for a *due* discharge of this necessary duty is, to be hearty in our repentance, fervent in our devotions, diffusive and chearful in our charity, and sincere in forgiving all who have any way injured or offended us. And let not any one expect that his *want* of *preparation* will be allowed as an excuse for his *not receiving*; since it is incumbent upon all men to *prepare* themselves. It is the very condition of our *happiness*, and therefore must be carefully discharged, if we expect either the comfort of a good *conscience* here, or the certain hope of *salvation* hereafter.

Now to GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY GHOST, be ascribed as is most due, all honour, &c. *Amen.*

SERMON VII.

The Manifestation of GOD in the Flesh.

1 TIM. iii. 16. former part.

*And without controversy, great is the
mystery of godliness; GOD was
manifest in the flesh.*

I TOLD you in the beginning of the discourse **SERMON**
I lately made to you, upon these words, **VII.**
that my design was to treat of that great
article of our faith and religion, the *nativity*
and *incarnation* of the *Son* of GOD. For
that our Church having appointed *this season*
for the solemn and thankful commemoration
of the great benefits which this miracle of
love and condescension has procured for man-
kind, I could not more suitably employ my-
self, than by discoursing upon this *great myste-
ry* of *godliness*, and setting before you the
nature

nature and design of it as it is laid down in the *holy Scriptures*, that we may both *think* aright of it, and be also taught how to *act*, as becomes those, for whose sakes such an amazing instance of love and favour has been shewn. And to this end I undertook to shew you,

I. FIRST, That our Saviour *JESUS CHRIST*, who is here said to be *GOD manifest in the flesh*, is TRULY and ESSENTIALLY GOD.

II. SECONDLY, To lay before you the *manner* in which we are to understand this great *mystery* of the *incarnation* of the Son of GOD. And

III. THIRDLY and LASTLY, To draw such *inferences* as may be useful towards our spiritual improvement.

I HAVE already, in great measure, dispatched the FIRST head, having proved the *Divinity* of our LORD,

1. *First*, FROM the words that begin St. *John's Gospel*.

2. *Secondly*, FROM those places wherein he is styled GOD in the highest and most *emphatical* sense of the word.

3. *Thirdly*, FROM those places wherein he is declared to be the CREATOR of all things,

4. *Fourthly*,

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4. *Fourthly*, FROM those passages that ascribe to him the *divine perfection* of infinite wisdom and knowledge.

5. I PROCEED to a *fifth* proof of this grand point, from those passages of *holy Scripture* which declare him to be the object of *adoration* and *religious worship*.

THE *Scriptures* of the *Old* and the *New Testament*, and all the ancient *Fathers* agree in declaring that GOD only is to be worshipped. That no Being is to be addressed to either by sacrifice, or invocation, or any other act of religious worship, save only the *one SUPREME* and true GOD. Thus GOD declares,—*Thou shalt have no other gods before me* *, or besides me. The meaning of which prohibition, is made plain in the words that follow at the 5th verse, *Thou shalt not bow down thy self to them nor serve them*. So again, *Thou shalt fear the LORD thy GOD and serve him, and swear by his name* †. And this was not a temporary command, and such as was to oblige for a season only, but was intended for ever to assert to the *Sovereign* of the world, the *honour* due unto him, and to forbid the paying any act of adoration and religious worship to any other being whatsoever.

THIS is very plain from *Isaiab*, *Before me there was no GOD formed, neither shall there be after me* ‡. And from *Deuteronomy*,

* *Exod.* xx. 3. † *Deut.* vi. 13. ‡ *Isaiab* xliii. 10.

If

*If there arise among you a Prophet; or a Dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, (which thou hast not known) and let us serve them, thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that Prophet, or that dreamer of dreams; for the LORD your GOD proveth you, to know whether you love the LORD your GOD with all your heart, and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your GOD and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and you shall serve him, and cleave unto him *. And how very offensive idolatry was to him is plain from the verses that follow; If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, — Thou shalt not consent unto him, — neither shall thine eye pity him; — but thou shalt surely kill him †.*

FROM these passages we find, that, as the power of working a miracle would not give authority to a man in any attempt of leading others to the adoration of any object whatsoever, save the GOD of Israel only, nor justify those who should be misled thereby, into such a practice; so, a transgression of that kind was so very enormous, and so highly of-

* Deut. xiii. 1, 2, 3, 4. † Ver. 6, 7, 8, 9.

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fenfitive to GOD, that whoever should presume thus to *entice* others to it, was to be killed without mercy; and the hand of the person enticed, though the nearest relation or dearest friend, was to be *first* upon him to put him to death.

AND as GOD is thus represented in the *old* Testament, as a *jealous* GOD, who will not give his glory to another, nor suffer any creature, how exalted soever, to partake of the adoration and worship due to him, so also does our LORD and his *Apostles* in the *new* Testament affirm the same thing.

OUR blessed Saviour when he was tempted by the *devil*, after citing the *passage* in *Deuteronomy* before mentioned, shews both that the expressions there used of *fearing* GOD, and *serving* him, and *swearing* by him, did denote the *worship* of GOD in general, and moreover that the same was to be payed to HIM ONLY. Because the reason he gives, why the *devil* ought *not* to be worshipped, holds as well against the worship of all other creatures as of him. For he does not fetch his reason for refusing to fall down and worship *Satan*, from any consideration of the *malignity* of his nature, or his enmity to GOD and mankind, but from the declaration of GOD concerning this point, that *he* ALONE should be worshipped. *Thou shalt worship the LORD thy GOD, and him ONLY shalt thou serve* *.

* Matt. ix. 10.

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AND agreeably to this St. Paul condemns the Heathens, who whilst they knew GOD, that is, professed the belief of but one GOD, of absolute power, the supreme Sovereign of the world, glorified him not as GOD, but changed the glory of the incorruptible GOD into an image made like to corruptible man; and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things, and changed the truth of GOD into a lie, worshipping for gods them who by nature were no gods, and so served the creature more than the Creator, *παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα*, besides the Creator, who is blessed for ever *.

By this passage 'tis plain the Apostle places the idolatry of the Heathens both in the worship of the supreme GOD by the use of images, and also in the worship of creatures together with the Creator. It is not here intimated that they paid absolute worship to creatures (nor is it conceivable that they should do so, as if they believed there was more than one absolutely SUPREME GOD) they are here condemned for serving the creature at all; for paying any kind of adoration to those who by nature are no gods, and thereby dishonouring the Creator, who is blessed for ever, and the only object of worship, as he is ALONE able to save and to destroy.

AND the Angel's refusing to accept St. John's adoration of him, and requiring him to see that he did it not †, and giving him this short but

* Rom. i. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25. † Rev. xix. 10. xxii. 9.
per-

peremptory direction, WORSHIP GOD, is a confirmation of what has been hitherto said upon this subject, and fully shews that religious worship is to be directed to GOD only; and that no dignity of nature, no excellency of worth and perfection can give any creature a title to it.

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BUT now notwithstanding all these express declarations of GOD's being the *only* object of religious worship, notwithstanding we are so often assured, that GOD is a jealous GOD, and will not give his glory to another, yet are we in as plain terms required to worship the *Son*, as we are in any of the passages foregoing required to worship the *Father*. Thus we are told by our blessed *Saviour* himself, *That the Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should HONOUR the Son, even as they HONOUR the Father; and that he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him* *. Again; *whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I DO, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it* †.

DR. MILL tells us that some MSS. add the word ME, *whatsoever ye shall ask ME*.—But the sense is the same, whether it be added or not. Forasmuch as he promises to do *whatsoever* shall be asked *in his name*, which at once shews that *he* was able to help and to *save to the ut-*

* John v. 22.

† John xiv. 13, 14.

termost ; and that men might securely confide in him for the performance of what should be asked *in his name*.

THE author to the *Hebrews**, after he had observed, that *we have a great high Priest that is passed into the heavens, JESUS the Son of GOD*.—And that he is *not an high Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities*,—adds,—*Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*.—*Christ* the great high Priest is the person here spoken of, to whose *throne of grace* we are bidden to *come boldly*, and whereat we are assured we shall obtain mercy ; and what is this less than a command to *Christians* to place their trust and confidence in *his grace*, and to invoke *him* to *help* them in *time of need*?

AND that he was the object of the religious *worship* of *angels* as well as men, the same author had before proved by a quotation from the 97th Psalm. *And let all the angels of GOD worship him*†.

St. Paul after he had asserted the *Divinity* of *Christ*, by saying that he was in the *form of GOD*, and *thought it not robbery to be equal with GOD*,—affirms that *at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things un-*

* Heb. iv. 14, 15, 16. † Heb. i. 6.

der the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of GOD the FATHER. If this is not declaring him to be the object of the religious worship of the whole creation, I know not by what words he can be declared such.

THE practice also of the *Apostles*, and first *Christians*, as it is related in the *Scriptures*, is such a comment upon this doctrine, as cannot be evaded. The first martyr, *St. Stephen*, is recorded to have solemnly invoked our Saviour, with his dying breath, in terms importing the highest degree of affiance and trust in him, as the LORD of all.—LORD JESUS receive my spirit; —and, LORD, lay not this sin to their charge *.

ST. PAUL, when he speaks of there being given to him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, —adds, that—*For this thing he besought the LORD*, τὸν κύριον, with the ARTICLE, which, when prefixed, does always denote the word κύριος to be meant of our LORD CHRIST. But the answer given to the *Apostle*, together with his resolution thereupon, precludes all evasion, and makes it downright necessary to understand the Word of Christ, *He said unto me, MY GRACE is sufficient for thee; for MY STRENGTH is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that THE POWER of CHRIST may*

* Acts vii. 59, 60.

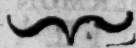
*The Manifestation of**rest upon me* *.

For 'tis most evident that the GRACE and STRENGTH which are mentioned in the beginning of the *verse*, as the grace and strength of *him* whom the Apostle supplicates and invokes, are, in the end of the *verse*, called *the power of CHRIST*. So that it is as certain that *CHRIST* is here addressed to in a religious manner for help and succour, as it is that there is any mention made at all of *CHRIST* in this *passage*.

AND agreeably hereunto it was the common and avowed practice of the *Apostles* and *first Christians*, thus to worship *CHRIST* by solemn and religious Invocation. Indeed this practice seems plainly to have given occasion, to the *phrase*, by which *Christians* were in the beginning described and distinguished from the professors of every other kind of religion, when they were called ἐπικαλέμενοι τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ and ἐπικαλέμενοι τὸν κύριον.—Persons who *invoked*, or *called upon the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST*,—and who *called upon the LORD* †. And the *prayers* used by the *Apostles* at the beginning and at the close of their respective *epistles*, are a farther proof of this point, *they* being generally so many forms of address to *Christ*, as well as to *GOD the Father*, for all good things, for the use and benefit of those to whom they wrote.

* 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8, 9. † Acts ix. 14. 1 Cor. i. 2. 2 Tim. ii. 22.

AND



AND the instances of giving thanks and praise, and of ascribing all honour glory, and blessing to the *Son* as well as the *Father*, are *so many* as not to need to be particularly noted. But if this be so, and we are not only permitted, but required to honour, adore, and religiously *invoke* the *Son*, as well as the eternal *Father*, what can account for this seeming inconsistency, with what has been before shewn to be the doctrine of the whole *Bible*, that GOD alone is to be honoured with religious invocation and worship? And which way can these things be reconciled, but upon the supposition of what is contended for? Namely, that "*Christ* the *Son* of GOD is "truly and essentially GOD, of the same "nature, substance, and perfections with the "*Father*."

THIS indeed makes every thing wonderfully plain and easy; if this be the truth of the case, all the parts of *Scripture*, that direct the worship of GOD *alone*, and forbid the paying any act thereof to the *creature*, are perfectly of a piece with those which command every kind of *religious honour* to be paid to the *Son* of GOD also.

As assuredly therefore as the *Scriptures* of GOD are not at variance with one another, the *Son* of GOD is of the same nature, and endued with the same dignity and perfections with the *Father*. Nor can any thing be replied to this, unless it may be shewn

that there is any real *distinction* between the kinds of worship required to be *respectively* paid to the *Father* and the *Son*, and that the honours to be paid to the *one* are *different* from those which are to be paid to the *other*.

THIS indeed is what the *Arians* pretend, who have accordingly devised a distinction of *religious* worship into *higher* and *lower*, according as it is differently directed to the *supreme* GOD, or to another *object*; but this is a distinction utterly *precarious*, without the least foundation in reason or *Scripture*, and is indeed intirely contrary to the whole design and tenor of the latter.

ALL acts of *religious* worship are, without exception, appropriated to GOD, whether they are *sacrifices*, *vows*, *oaths*, or *prayers*, nor do we find any the least intimation of different *degrees* of these several acts of devotion, as if some were *supreme*, and others *inferior*, according as they were differently directed to GOD, or to a *creature*. No mention of a difference in these acts of religion arising from a different intention in the heart of the person who performs them.

BUT on the contrary GOD has himself determined all acts of religious worship to one kind, has made them all *absolute* and *supreme*, by requiring them to be *all* paid to himself *only*, and absolutely excluding all *other* Beings from a share with him of any religious honour whatsoever.

AND

AND so we find St. Paul and Barnabas SERMON
VII. understood the matter, when they restrained the *Lycaonians* from offering sacrifice unto them. They did not go about to set their intentions right, and to warn them against sacrificing to them in the *same* sense, and with the *same* meaning with which they sacrificed to GOD, but they absolutely required them not to sacrifice to them at all. The angel forbids St. John to worship him, without furnishing him with any distinctions in the matter, how far he might worship him, and how far not, but forbids it *absolutely*, and directs him to the true and only object of adoration; WORSHIP GOD. And so our blessed Saviour, when tempted by Satan, makes no distinction between *one* degree and *another* of the same act of devotion, according as it might be differently directed to GOD or a creature, but declares, that the LORD GOD *only* was to be worshipped, whereby he indeed destroys all possible grounds for this distinction, by thus appropriating all acts of religious worship whatsoever to GOD alone.

I HAVE been the more particular in examining the ground of this distinction, because it is the *only* support, weak as it is, of the *Arian* cause. For if indeed all acts of religious worship are in every degree of them appropriated to GOD only, through the whole Bible, and yet all men are commanded in the *same* holy Scriptures to worship the Son as well as

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the Father, to honour the Son even as they honour the Father, and are farther told, that he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father, then must the Father and the Son be ONE and the SAME GOD, of the SAME nature and perfections; And so I have, as I hope, fully and unexceptionably proved what I undertook under my *first* head of discourse. I propose now to lay before you

II. SECONDLY, The nature of this *manifestation* of GOD in the *flesh*: Or the manner in which we are to understand this great *mystery* of the *incarnation* of the Son of GOD. And

I. FIRST, We are to think and believe that GOD was so *manifest* in the *flesh*, as to assume and take upon himself a true and *real* body; a body that consisted of flesh and bones, of blood and spirits, disposed and framed in such an *order* and manner as to make a true and proper *human* body, of the same kind with that of other men.

Now this is so fully set forth in all the accounts concerning our blessed *Saviour* in the *holy Scriptures*, that there would hardly have been need of making a *particular* mention of it, if the absurd *conceits* of some of the *antient Hereticks*, had not made it necessary. But however absurd it is to deny so plain a truth, there have been those who did deny it, who alledged,

alleged, that the Son of GOD did not *manifest* himself to men in a real body, but that it was a *phantom* only, or the *semblance* and *appearance* of a *body* without any true and *real* substance; and that all those that believed they *saw*, and *felt*, and *heard* him, were under a *strong delusion*, a *cheat* upon the senses, the whole being no other than a *similitude* and *appearance*. Now all this is plainly absurd and ridiculous, in the first proposal and mention of it; and yet it will not be amiss to suggest to you one or two considerations which prove the absurdity of it. And

1. *First*, THAT opinion of our Saviour's not having taken upon himself a *true* and *real* body, but only the *semblance* or *appearance* of a *body*, is an opinion directly contrary to all the declarations of *Scripture* about it. And

2. *Secondly*, *Evacuates* and makes void the whole design of our Saviour's coming into the world.

1. *First*, 'Tis an opinion directly contrary to all the declarations of the *holy Scriptures* about it. Thus the *text* tells us that GOD was *manifest in the flesh*. But with what propriety could he be said to be *manifest in the flesh*, if he was not *indeed* clothed with flesh at all, but had only the *appearance* of it? The *manifestation* of a thing implies a full and clear evidence of its being what it appears to be, even to a degree of certainty and conviction. And accordingly our Saviour is said by

St. John,

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St. *John*, to have been *made flesh*, and to have dwelt among us, and by the *Apostle* to have been made of the seed of *David*, according to the flesh, and to have been made of a woman; by all which forms of speech the reality and formal nature of a human body is set forth so expressly, that nothing can be more: But

2. Secondly, THE contrary supposition, plainly evacuates the whole design of our Saviour's coming into the world. One great end of his coming among us was, to give us a perfect pattern of holiness, and a good life, in the person of one of the same nature, and beset with the same temptations, and compassed with the same infirmities, (so as to be without sin) that we ourselves are; and at last to suffer that punishment that was due to us, that by suffering in our stead we might be freed from punishment, and by the merit, both of his obedience and suffering, we might be made capable of glory and happiness.

BUT now if our LORD was not truly a man, but only a phantom or apparition, then his actions for us were not real but seeming ones only; then he was not really any example of holiness and piety, neither did he then really and indeed suffer in our stead. So that the notion of his not having a true and real human body, is not only a contradiction to the plainest declarations of Scripture, but is most absurd and ridiculous in itself, and impious in its consequences. But

2. SECONDLY,

2. SECONDLY, The next thing that we are to believe of the nature of the *incarnation* of the *Son* of GOD, is, that as he did assume, and take to himself a true and real human body, so he had likewise a *real and proper human* or *rational soul*.

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'Tis true indeed the word *flesh*, in which GOD is here in the *text* said to be *manifest*, does in its first and strictest meaning signify only the *corporeal* or bodily part of man; and therefore, though the words of the *text* are a full proof of what was asserted under my last head, that the *Son* of GOD did take upon himself a *true* human body, they are not of themselves a sufficient ground to establish my *second* assertion upon, that he had likewise a *true and proper human soul*: This therefore must be supplied from other *texts*: and by reasons taken from the known and allowed end and design of the *Son* of GOD's coming into the world.

BUT then I would have it observed, that though the word *flesh*, is in its most proper acceptation, acknowledged to signify that part of us, which we call the *body*, yet it does in this place of the *text*, as well as in many other places of *Scripture*, denote the *whole man*, as he is a being compounded of *body* and *soul*. Thus 'tis used, when 'tis said, *that all FLESH had corrupted his way**;

* Gen. vi. 12.

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and where GOD is called *the GOD of the spirits of all FLESH* ||: again, in Deut. *who of all FLESH, hath heard the voice of GOD* †? *All FLESH shall perish together* §. *All FLESH shall know that I am the LORD* ‡. And not only in the old, but the new Testament style also: as in Luke, *All FLESH*, that is all mankind, *shall see the salvation of GOD* ††: and, *hath given him power over all FLESH* ||||: that is, over all the world, or all human nature. In all these, and a multitude of other places, the word FLESH, which primarily signifies the *body* only, is used to signify the whole man, consisting of *soul and body*; and 'tis by the same figure and form of speech, with *that* wherein the word *soul*, (though it primarily signifies only the *spiritual* part that is within us, which is distinct from the body) is used to signify the whole man, *body and soul together*. Thus, *Save that which every SOUL, or every man must eat* †. *If a SOUL bear the voice of swearing* *: that is, if any person do either of these. And so St. Peter says, that *a few, even eight SOULS were saved in the ark by water* †: From all these places, 'tis plain that the words SOUL and FLESH, though they do *primarily* signify the *spirit and body*

|| Numb. xvi. 22. † Deut. v. 26. § Job xxxiv. 15.
 † Isaiah xlix. 26. †† Luke iii. 6. ||| John xvii. 2.
 † Exod. xii. 16. || Lev. iv. 2. * Lev. v. 1. † 1 Pet.
 iii. 20.

of man, as they are *distinct* substances from each other, yet according to the *Scripture* use of them, they do each of them by themselves frequently denote both these substances of *body* and *soul* together, as they are united into one person. And that the word FLESH does signify here in the text, *the whole man*, is evident, if we consider, as we did under the last head, that if we take it to signify the *body* only, without the *soul*, we shall thereby take it in such a sense, as is directly opposite not only to many other plain texts of *Scripture*, but likewise to the very foundation of *Christianity*.

I. *First*, To expound *GOD's manifesting himself in the flesh*, so that it shall signify his taking a human *body* upon himself, without a human *soul*, is to contradict the most plain assertions of *Scripture* in other places: as where 'tis said, *By MAN came death, by MAN came also the resurrection of the dead* †. And, *the first MAN is of the earth, earthy; the second MAN is the LORD from Heaven* ‡. And so our *Saviour* speaking of himself, says, *A MAN that hath told you the truth* *: Now we know that the only true notion of the word MAN is of a creature compounded of an *organized body*, and a *rational soul*: and neither of these singly is sufficient to denominate any being a MAN: and therefore since our *Saviour* is so frequently

† 1 Cor. xv. 21. ‡ v. 47. * John viii. 40.



STYLED MAN, without the least intimation of his being called so, in any sense *different* from the common and *usual* one, his being so called, is a sufficient proof of his being *really* such: and consequently of his having a *proper rational human soul*, united to a *real human body*.

AND thus the *Scripture* says expressly it was, *My soul*, says our *Saviour*, is *exceeding sorrowful**. And in another place, *Now is my soul troubled*†. And 'tis said, that *Jesus crying with a loud voice gave up the ghost*‡; that is, the soul or spirit that was in him. Thus we see the falsity of that *heretical* opinion, of our *Saviour's* not assuming a proper *human soul*; but that the divine *Λόγος* did actuate his *body* and supply in it the place of a *rational soul*: And as this notion is contrary to express *Scripture*; so

2. *Secondly*, It is a dangerous one also, and if true, would overturn the whole *scheme* of *Christianity*, as believed and professed by the *Catholick Church*. For the truth in *Jesus* is, that he suffered for our sins in our stead: But if he had been a person to whom the *Divine Nature* was instead of a *soul*, he would have been so far from having truly *suffered* what we deserved, and in *OUR STEAD*; that he could not have been said to have ever *suffered* any thing at all. For the *Divine Nature* is absolutely incapable of suffering; and so is a

* Matt. xxvi. 38, † John xii. 27, ‡ Mark xiv. 37.

human *body* too, without a human *soul* united to it: Because the *body* is in itself *incapable* of any *thought* or preception, either of pleasure or of pain; and consequently however torn, bruised, or pierced, it cannot in any *proper* sense be said to *suffer*, because it is the *soul* only that *perceives* and feels, through the means, and by the *intervention* of the *body*.

So that as certain as it is that our blessed *Saviour* did *really* feel and *suffer* the uneasiness of a *necessitous* life, and the pangs and torture of a most *cruel* and lingering death for our sakes, and in our *stead*; so certain it is, that his *body* was *informed* and *actuated* by a human *rational soul*; and that they are guilty of great impiety as well as falsehood, who deny it.

If it be said to this, that though he must have had a *soul* that he might be capable of *feeling* and of suffering, yet that his *soul* might not be a *rational*, but a *sensitive soul* only; 'tis readily answered that upon this supposition, if he could have *suffered* in some sense as men suffer, yet he could not have suffered as a *complete* man, as one endued with whole human nature.

BESIDES, we read of his growing in *wisdom* as well as in *stature*; that is, he *improved* in *knowledge* and *learning*, as he grew in years and *stature*: But this could be true only with regard to his *rational soul*; for as the *sensitive soul* is an unfit subject of any degree of wisdom

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dom at all, so neither could the divine WORD, or Son of GOD be said to GROW in *wisdom*, he being both the *power* of GOD and *the wisdom* of GOD. It is evident therefore, that as our *Saviour* did assume and take to himself a true and *real human* body, so that *body* was *enlivened* and actuated by what was strictly and properly a *rational*, or *human soul*.

I MUST defer the farther prosecution of this important subject to another opportunity.

Now to GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY GHOST, THREE Persons and ONE GOD, be ascribed, as is most due, all honour and glory, praise, might, majesty and dominion, both now and evermore.
Amen.

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S E R M O N V I I I .

The Manifestation of G O D in the Flesh.

1 T I M. iii. 16.

—*G O D was manifest in the Flesh.*

I N discoursing lately upon these words I S E R M O N
V I I I .
undertook

I. FIRST, To shew that our Saviour *Jesus Christ*, who is here said to be *G O D manifest in the flesh*, is TRULY and ESSENTIALLY *G O D*.

II. SECONDLY, To lay before you the *manner* in which we are to understand this great *mystery* of the *incarnation* of the *Son* of *G O D*. And then,

III. THIRDLY and LASTLY, To draw such *inferences* as may be useful towards our spiritual improvement.

I have at large discoursed upon the *first* of these, and I made an entrance upon the *second*. And I shewed you that

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1. THE FIRST thing to be considered in this great mystery of the *incarnation* of the Son of GOD is, that he assumed a *true* and a *real body*; a *body* consisting of flesh and bones, of blood and spirits, disposed and formed in such an order and manner, as to make a *proper human body*, of the same kind with that of every other man. And

2. SECONDLY, That as he had a *true* and *real human body*, so the same was informed and actuated by a *true* and proper *rational soul*. I come now to another particular, and that is to shew you

3. THIRDLY, That the Son of GOD in *manifesting* himself in the *flesh*, or in assuming a *human body* and *soul*, became subject to all the infirmities and weaknesses of *human nature*, sin only excepted. Now the truth of this is plain, from all parts of the *New Testament*, that make any mention of our Saviour's human nature; for he is there always represented as surrounded with all those *innocent* frailties that are incidental to our human state. He is said to have *wept*, which is a known effect and expression of *sorrow*: He is said likewise to *grieve*, and to be EXCEEDING *sorrowful*, to have been in an AGONY, that made such bitter impressions upon him, that he *sweat great drops of blood*, through the excess and vehemence thereof: He is likewise said to have been *hungry*, to have been *athirst*, and to have been *weary*.

He

HE was tempted also, and that for forty days together, during which time the *devil* did, in the most cunning and subtle manner, lay before him all those baits and snares, that are most apt to win upon men, and seduce them from GOD and their duty. And to finish all, this same blessed Person did at last submit to the greatest and most dreaded instance of human *weakness and infirmity*, DEATH: And if we take a view of that last and most calamitous scene we shall find all the convincing and sensible proofs of *human infirmity* imaginable, I mean so far as those *infirmities* are innocent.

HE was in a deep consternation of mind upon the dismal prospect of his approaching sufferings, he was under the utmost dread and apprehensions of them, so as to desire, if possible, that that *bitter cup might pass from him*. And when he was now in the piercing pangs of his most *painful* death, he had such a strong feeling of them, as to send forth those most *affecting* accents of distress from his most patient spirit; *My GOD, my GOD, why hast thou forsaken me?* So truly did he *carry our sorrows, and bear our infirmities*; and so just reason is there for applying the Prophet's words to him, when he questions whether there was *any sorrow like unto his sorrow* *. To put an end to which, and to finish the *glorious purpose* of all his sufferings, (and which is the fullest proof of his being very

* Lam. i. 12.

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man, and subject to the infirmities of men,) he at last gave up the ghost.

BUT yet (which deserves well to be observed) there was such a difference between the *manner* of his death and that of all other men, as gives a proof at once of his being MAN and GOD also: For as he did *himself* surrender up his human *soul*, whilst his *body* had still some remains of *strength* and *vigour*, and so was capable of receiving and entertaining the *soul* a longer time; he did not only suffer as a *man*, but shewed at the same time an act of *Almighty Power*. For according to the settled rules of nature, the *soul* is so strictly united to the *body*, that no created power is capable of separating them, but by offering such violence to the *body*, as makes it incapable of joining with the operations of the *soul*. So that our Saviour by *giving up his soul*, in the *manner* he did, gave an instance of his *Omnipotence*, and a proof of his *Godhead*, in the very article of his *death*.

THE union of other men's *souls* and *bodies* is never dissolved so long as their *bodies* continue in any state or condition proper for the entertainment of the *soul*; whereas our Saviour gave up his soul, whilst the vigour of his bodily faculties still remained; for 'tis said, *he cried with a loud voice* at the very time that he *gave up the ghost*. And this uncommon method of breathing out his *soul* was so plain an act of a *divine power*, that it had an im-

mediate effect upon the *Centurion* who attended at our LORD's *crucifixion*; for as 'tis said, *when the Centurion saw that our Saviour so cried with a LOUD voice and gave up the ghost*, he presently declared his conviction, and said, *surely this was a righteous man*. But this by the way.

My *design* under this head was to shew, that our *Saviour* was in a most true and proper sense MAN like us, in as much as he was subject to all the *common infirmities* of our *human nature*, (sin and folly only excepted) and this, I hope, has by this time been made plain to you. I proceed therefore

4. FOURTHLY, To another thing to be considered, in this great mystery of GOD's *manifesting himself in the flesh*; and that is, that as he took upon him our *flesh*, consisting of a *true human body*, united to a *rational soul*, so, tho' this his *human nature* was subject to infirmities, yet it was however free from the *greatest* of all *imperfections*, SIN; and that absolutely and entirely in every respect. And this the plain testimony of *Scripture* assures us of, and the very end and design of our *Saviour's* coming and suffering makes necessary.

FOR as the *author* of the *epistle* to the *Hebrews* says, *We have not an high Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin* *. And St. Peter assures us

* Heb. iv. 5.

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that *Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps, who DID NO SIN, neither was guile found in his mouth**. And that this must necessarily be so is plain from the very reason and nature of things, and from the end and design of the Son of GOD's *manifesting himself in the flesh*. The main design of this, we know, was for our *pardon and salvation*: We had transgressed GOD's laws, and thereby were *faln from happiness, and merited eternal death*; and in order to release us from this *punishment*, and that we might regain a *possibility* of bliss and happiness, consistently with the *dignity and honour* of GOD's laws, and the *divine justice*, it pleased the wisdom of GOD to determine, that he would accept of the sufferings of another person, *in OUR STEAD*; which made it necessary, that *that person* should be of such a *dignity*, that his sufferings might be at least of equal *value* with the sufferings of all other men put together; otherwise the means used would not have been answerable to the end and purpose they were intended for, which was to *satisfy GOD's offended justice, for the united sins* of the whole world.

BUT the sufferings of no *one person* whatsoever, if he was a *sinner*, could *satisfy* for the *redemption* of other sinners: because in such a case his *own sins* would deserve the punish-

* 1 Pet. ii. 21, 22.

ment that he underwent: The *innocence* then of a person that suffers *to expiate* other men's sins, is the *least* thing that is requisite for the purpose. From whence we must conclude, that even from the very design of our Saviour's *sufferings*, it must be, that though he was a man as we are, encompassed with the *usual infirmities of human nature*, yet that *that* of sin must be excepted, and accordingly that he was *absolutely* PURE, FAULTLESS, and IMMACULATE; without *spot* or *blemish*. But

5. FIFTHLY, The last thing to be considered in this great *mystery of GOD's manifesting himself in the flesh* is, that he did so take to himself our flesh, that there was an entire and complete *union* of the *divine and human nature* in one PERSON, and yet *without confusion of substance*. We must not therefore with *some hereticks* of old confound the TWO NATURES in *Christ* together, or suppose the one to be swallowed up in the other. Those *expressions* of *Scripture* which affirm, that the *Son of GOD* was made man, can mean no less than, as has been proved, that he was *truly and properly* speaking a *man*; and since, *before* he was *made man*, he was *truly and properly* GOD, and this *divine nature* is capable of no *change* or alteration, the two natures must still continue distinct; and both together make up the ONE *undivided* PERSON of CHRIST; there being the like *union* and *communion* between them, towards the making one

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individual being, as there is between the *soul* and *body* for the constituting the person of any ONE man.

AND this is what we must of necessity believe of this great *article* of *faith*, the *incarnation* of our LORD. And though it must be allowed to be a great *mystery*, yet we have no cause to question the *credibility* of it upon that account; since it is evidently declared in the *Scriptures*, we may depend upon its being true, though we cannot comprehend the *manner* of its being so. There are many truths in nature which we *know* to be such, and are able to *demonstrate* that they are so, when yet we are altogether at a loss to *explain* either to ourselves or others in what *particular manner* they are so.

THUS to give you an instance in a very familiar case, and which is justly fitted to explain the meaning of what I am now upon. We all know and feel that we have a *soul* within us which *actuates* and informs our *bodies*; and we do every minute experience the common intercourse that there is between these two substances our *bodies* and our *souls*; and we are conscious of their mutual actings upon each other, how the soul commands the motions of the body, and how the body in its turn, *affects* and *moves* the *soul*; and yet who is there that will pretend to explain the *manner* how this is done?

THAT

THAT it is done, we know, and are sure of by experience, and that is all; but by what particular *bands* such *contrary substances* are united to each other, and whence their *union* becomes so *strict*, and yet their *distinction* so very apparent, I think no man will have the vanity and presumption to attempt to shew. Why then should any one make a difficulty of believing a doctrine set forth in *holy Scripture* in the plainest terms, only because he cannot *comprehend* it? I say for what reason should any one scruple his assent to this doctrine of the *incarnation* of the Son of GOD, for no other reason, but because he cannot conceive how the *divine* and the *human* nature can be so united as to make the *one person* of *Christ*? when at the same time, although he cannot conceive how his own *body* and *soul*, which are *distinct substances*, should have a *vital union* between them, he yet believes and knows that they are so united and do both together make but *one individual person*.

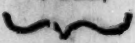
FROM what has been said I think it is plain, that the alledged *incomprehensibleness* of this doctrine of the *incarnation* is no manner of objection against the *credibility* of it. Indeed, considering how plainly it is set forth to us in the *holy Scripture*, and considering withal what a wonderful honour and glory it reflects upon mankind, there seems to be a great degree of perverseness in those who oppose it.

BUT

BUT in truth they who deny this *doctrine* do it by way of *salvo* for their presumption in denying *another* of like importance, and as plainly revealed, *viz.* the *satisfaction* made by *Christ* to the justice of GOD for the sins of the world. They are resolved not to acknowledge *one*, and they are but consistent with themselves therefore in disavowing the *other*.

FOR 'tis in this *union* of the two *natures* of the person of CHRIST that the power of satisfying GOD's justice is entirely founded. The *humanity* was necessary that he might be *capable* of *suffering* at all: And the *Divinity*, that *his* sufferings might be of due value and efficacy for the great purpose intended: and a *personal union* of both natures was as necessary as either, that the properties of *one* might with truth and just propriety be predicated of the *other*. It is therefore not at all surprising that *they* who are bent against receiving the doctrine of the *satisfaction* of *Christ*, and the infinite MERIT of his sufferings, should cavil against those *principles*, in the *truth* of which, both reason and revelation do plainly ground all the efficacy of *his* life and death, for procuring the *redemption* of man.

WHAT is indeed just matter of wonder is, that there should be any one who after an acknowledgment of the *reality* of the *satisfaction* should be doubtful concerning the *particular*

cular reason of the efficacy of *Christ's* sacrifice. SERMON
But since this has been made a *doubt*, I de- VIII.
fire your patience whilst I lay before you, 
what I think sufficient for the clearing and
resolving it.

I. IT is absolutely evident, that whatever
our *Saviour* did and suffered must have a
worth or *value* in it, proportionable to the
dignity of *nature* of which *he* was possessed.
Because, the *same* obedience and sufferings,
which, if he had been a *mere* man, could
have had no more merit or *value* in them,
than the *innocence* of his *humanity* could give
them, must of course have acquired so much
ADDITIONAL efficacy, from the conjunction of
the *Divine Nature*, with the *human*, as there is
DIGNITY in *one* above the *other*; that is, If there
was any degree of worth or value in them
at all under the *first* consideration, the same
must be *infinitely* increased under the *second*.

THIS is the way of estimating the *value*
of any act of *humility* or condescension a-
mong men. An *action* in every other circum-
stance the *same*, may be very *different* as it
is shewn by a *great* Prince, or by one of
the *lowest* of his subjects; and what would be
no act of *humility* at all in *one* person, might
in the *other* be the greatest proof of it, and
be justly celebrated as an instance of great good-
ness and condescension. And the reason of
the *different value* of the *same action* in our
SAVIOUR, under the different consideration of
his

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his being a MERE *man* or GOD *man*, is the *same* as in the case now mentioned. Only *here* the degree of the difference must be infinite. But it is doubtless *universally* true; that the *worth* of any act of condescension will hold an exact proportion to the *excellency* of the person who shews it.

AND it is plainly upon this *maxim* that St. Paul grounds his argument, for the greatness of our Saviour's humility, in *becoming obedient to the death of the cross*, when he observes to the *Philippians**, that he who did thus humble himself, was in the *form* of GOD.

SINCE then the *holy Scriptures* do so *emphatically* ascribe the perfections of the *Divine Nature* to our Saviour's person, of whom *they* at the same time affirm that he obtained *eternal redemption for us*, with the PRICE of his BLOOD, it may reasonably be argued from the foregoing principle, that the manner is explained in them, whereby the *satisfaction* was wrought, whilst they thus affirm and describe the *dignity* of his person who wrought it. But the *holy Scriptures* have not left this matter to the reasonings of men only, from other truths there explained: It is the direct doctrine of several *texts*.

2. ST. PAUL in his speech to the *Elders* of the *Church of Ephesus*, hath this remarkable expression, — *Feed the Church of GOD which he*

* Phil. ii. 5, 6, 7, 8.

has purchased with his OWN BLOOD *. That SERMON VIII. this is the genuine reading of the text the learned Dr. Mills has, in his note upon it, very solidly evinced.

Now *he* who is here in the most emphatical manner styled GOD, is also said to have purchased his Church with his OWN BLOOD. And how unwilling soever the enemies to the doctrine of CHRIST's *satisfaction* may be to admit this *reading*, under the pretext of the singularity of the expression,—The BLOOD of GOD—'tis certain St. Ignatius† uses the same, and doubtless he used the language of the Church, which in that early time, can hardly be thought to have differed from *that* of the Apostles themselves. Whereupon as the infinite value of the *blood* of Christ. is very emphatically declared by being thus styled the *blood* of GOD; so the power and efficacy thereof for the procuring any benefits, or rescuing from any evils, to which it has been applied, is very plainly suggested thereby. This point is still farther clear and more directly affirmed in other texts.

3. THE AUTHOR to the *Hebrews* makes a comparison between the efficacy of the *blood*

* ἐκκλησίαν τῷ Θεῷ, ἣν περιποιήσατο διὰ τῆς ἰδίας αἱματος. Acts xx. 28.

† Μιμηταὶ ὄντες Θεῷ ἀναζωπυρήσαντες ἐν ΑΙΜΑΤΙ ΘΕΟΥ. Ignat. Ep. ad Ephes. Paragr. prim.

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of bulls and goats, and the blood of Christ towards sanctification, and argues, that, if the former could sanctify to the purifying of the flesh, the latter must have a greater power, even a power to purge men's consciences from dead works to serve the living GOD †. 'Tis plain this holy writer is arguing for an intrinsic natural virtue in the blood of Christ, for the producing the great effect ascribed to it, which the blood of Bulls and Goats had not. For if the virtue of one as well as the other had depended intirely upon the divine appointment, there could have been no need of making any comparison between them; because both must have ow'd their efficacy to what could not be affected by the comparison. For whether one be naturally more excellent than the other or not, it matters nothing in the argument; if the excellency of one above the other be not the true and real cause of procuring the effect contended for in the argument.

So THAT although it was intirely owing to the free grace and mercy of GOD, that any vicarious punishment at all was accepted, yet that our Saviour's sufferings in our stead, were accepted, because of their inherent worth and excellency, and as a just and proper equivalent for the benefits purchased thereby, seems to be the necessary result of the argument in this place.

† Heb. ix. 13, 14.

4. ST. PETER

4. ST. PETER uses a like argument, to shew SERMON
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the same thing, when he says that we were 
not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver
and gold,—but with the PRECIOUS BLOOD
of CHRIST—†. 'Tis probable the silver and
gold here meant is what the Jews, living at
a distance, brought up to Jerusalem, to buy
their offerings withal †, and so under the
terms, silver and gold, the offerings themselves
are designed through which they partook of
the benefits of their altar. So that here a-
gain, as in the passage last considered, a com-
parison is made between the efficacy of these
offerings, purchased with silver and gold, and
the efficacy of the PRECIOUS BLOOD of Christ,
in order to form an argument for faith and
hope in GOD; which is this—

SINCE the Jews had hope in GOD from their
offerings purchased with silver and gold, how
much firmer and better grounded is the hope
of Christians, from the consideration of their
being redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.
Now this argument appears to fail in its con-
clusion, if there be not an intrinsic worth
in that blood, which is here styled precious,
whereby it may be in its self meritorious of,
and an equivalent price for the redemption that
is wrought by it.

FOR GOD had promised that he would ac-
cept the various Jewish offerings, as well as the

† 1 Pet. i. 28, 29. † See Dr. Whitby's Comment upon
the place,

one *Christian sacrifice*. No argument therefore for *hope* in GOD from one rather than from the other can be founded in *this promise*, because *herein* they do not at all differ. This difference of *hope* therefore can be founded in nothing but the difference between the real and *intrinsic* value of the things here compared and opposed; and then, according to the plain and necessary purport of the *Apostle's* argument, and consequently according to the doctrine here delivered by him, the reason of the *efficacy* of our Saviour's *sacrifice*, for *propitiation* and *atonement*, was founded in the natural *inherent value* thereof.

5. OUR Saviour's own words do also evince the same thing, for when he says, that GOD gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.— And that he sent his Son into the world, that the world through him might be saved *. The salvation of man is directly affirmed to have been effected by or through the only begotten Son of GOD: This great effect is plainly ascribed to *Christ* under the sole consideration of his being the only begotten Son of GOD. Now since he is called the Son of GOD, and the only begotten Son of GOD, in the sense of his being truly GOD, 'tis evident the efficacy of his sufferings in his human nature, are ascribed by our LORD himself, to the

* John iii. 16, 17.

dignity of his person, and consequently the holy Scriptures have not left this great point under uncertainty and unexplained. I come now

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III. THIRDLY and LASTLY, To draw such *inferences* from what has been advanced upon this subject, as may be useful towards our spiritual improvement. And

I. *First*, As the *love* of GOD, and his surprising tenderness and compassion for man does present itself to our thoughts, through the whole and every part of this grand *transaction*, so the principal and most obvious *inference* of all others is, that we should be led thereby to *love* and *honour* him, with the warmest *zeal*; and the most enlarged *affecti-on*. But this, we know, is no way to be expressed, but by *doing* his will, and *obeying* his commands. So that a wicked life, after such an astonishing *scene* of mercy and goodness on the part of GOD, is plainly as base and ungrateful, as it is foolish and ruinous.

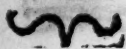
AND what excuse soever may be framed for a partial and defective obedience in those, who were never acquainted with this *awful* method of *salvation*, there is such a charge of *ingratitude* upon all who *now* neglect it, as will alone justify the greatest *severity* that can be used in the vengeance that will one day be poured out upon those, who shall continue proof against impressions from so many

acts of favour and mercy, as are conspicuous in every step of this glorious *dispensation*.

2. *Secondly*, As the consideration of the infinite *love* of GOD to us, in this *mystery* of the *incarnation*, should engage us to a return of *love* to him, so should we be from thence constrained to *love one another*. And this is the *Apostle's inference*. If, says he, *GOD so loved us, we ought also to love one another* *. That is; we ought to imitate him in his care for, and beneficence to us, by being as *helpful* to our fellow creatures as we can. Indeed no *return* but that of love and obedience can be made to GOD. For, *can any man be profitable to GOD, as a wise man may be profitable to himself?* No certainly.— But yet he may be *profitable* as to himself, so also to his *fellow creatures*. They are capable of receiving the fruits of our good will, by various acts of *charity* and beneficence, both to their souls and to their bodies also. Wherefore, after such amazing acts of favour and kindness from GOD towards us, if we are slack in relieving the wants and supplying the necessities of our brethren, whether spiritual or temporal, in the best and most effectual way we can, 'tis plain this consideration, however *weighty* in its self, has had but *little power* and influence over us.

3. *Thirdly*, THE infinite condescension of the Son of GOD, in thus *manifesting* himself

* 1 John iv: 11.



in the *flesh*, in the *lowly* manner he did, should teach us *humility*. Indeed the greatest act of *humiliation* in any creature whatsoever can no longer deserve the name, now that the LORD of *life* and *glory* has been thus pleased to divest himself of his *Majesty*, and to become a *man* of *sorrows*, and to submit to the necessities of a *mean* estate, and to the pangs of an *inglorious* death.

LET us therefore be careful that we do not set a value upon ourselves for any *fancied* excellencies, with regard to power, wealth, birth, or dignity; but let us look upon them all with coolness and indifference; and especially let us not dare to despise any one for the want of any or all of them, but consider what contempt our LORD put upon *them*, and all other worldly goods, and learn from thence to suppress all *motions* of *pride*, and to *think soberly* of *ourselves*, and *as we ought to think*.

4. *Fourthly*, THE love of GOD in the *incarnation* of his *only Son* should dispose us to a patient *resignation* to the will of GOD under all his *dispensations* towards us how sharp soever they may be. For we may be assured they are inflicted on us through good-will and loving-kindness, and are only the *reproofs* of a *friend* and the *corrections* of a *Father*, that we may learn wisdom, become obedient, and be happy.

FOR he who has done so much to secure the *everlasting* welfare of the children

of men, can never *delight* in their sufferings, or *willingly* grieve and afflict them. He, *who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, will with him freely give us all things** that are fitting, and for our real benefit: And therefore, if we do *suffer adversity*, we may be sure that it is *for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness, and yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness*, so that *our souls may be saved in the day of the LORD*†.

5. *Fifthly*, WE may learn from this great event, that the *salvation of man* is a matter of the greatest *weight* and consequence; and that it therefore behoves us all to look with the utmost care and attention to the concerns of our *souls*. If one was to judge of the value of *souls*, from the *little* solicitude many seem to be under concerning them, one would be ready to think the matter was not great whether they were to be *saved* or no. But *he*, who best knew the value of them, has taught us quite another lesson.

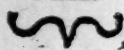
FOR surely it was not for a matter of nothing, that GOD should send his *only begotten Son, and the express image of his person*, to take upon him the *infirmities of human nature*, and to bear the scorn of a wicked world, and the pains of a bitter death; This would not have been done, merely to shew

* Rom. viii. 32. † Heb. xii. 11.

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men the way to *heaven*, if it was of no great account, whether they ever get thither or no. The all-wise GOD does nothing in vain. The *value* of our souls therefore must bear a proportion to the *care* that GOD has shewn for their welfare. Let us not then be so very foolish as to stand in the way of our own *happiness*, by *neglecting* so great *salvation*.

Now to GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY GHOST, THREE persons and ONE ever blessed GOD, be ascribed all honour and praise, the kingdom, power and glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

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2 E R M O

Religion the best security
against the Dangers and
Chills of Life.

CONSIDERING THE COMPLEXITY AND DIFFICULTY OF THE SUBJECT, AND THE NECESSITY OF A CLEAR AND CONCISE STATEMENT OF THE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED, THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF THE MAIN POINTS OF THE DISCUSSION.

S E R M O N IX.

Religion the best Security against the Dangers and Mischiefs of Life.

I PET. iii. 13.

Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good.

CONSIDERING the corrupt and depraved SERMON IX.
 tempers of men, how naturally prone they are to that which is *evil*, and how hardly they are brought to a true sense and liking of that which is *good*, 'tis no more than needs, to use all sorts of *arguments* that are any wise proper to determine them in their choice; to take them off from a sinful course, to inform their understandings, and lead their wills, and excite their affections to a hearty *pursuit* after *virtue* and *goodness*.

ACCORDINGLY we find the *holy Scriptures* (which, as becomes the *divine* wisdom and goodness, are admirably suited to the infirmities of men) every where urging us to a *religious*

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ligious practice, by all those methods and *topicks* of persuasion that are most likely to work upon us. They address themselves to our *hopes* and *fears*, which are the two grand *springs*, and ruling *principles* of all our actions.

IN the *first* place, they set before us a lively representation of the *rewards* and *punishments* of another life; and let us see that *good* and *evil* are, in their direct consequences, and in the final issue of things, nothing else but *life* and *death*, everlasting *happiness*, or everlasting *misery* in the other world. And as if this alone was not a sufficient argument to engage our attention, and excite our diligence in the ways of righteousness, they *draw us* moreover with the *cords of a man*, with such *motives* as address themselves more closely and feelingly to our affections, *viz.* the *present* and *sensible* advantages and disadvantages of a *virtuous* and *vicious* course of life.

FOR they shew us that *vice* is all over *folly*, that it is perpetually crossing its own measures, and confounding its own projects; and instead of putting us in possession of that *ease* and *comfort* from worldly enjoyments, (which is the only privilege it does, or can pretend to) it betrays us into a thousand *difficulties* and disappointments, which make our lives uneasy, embitter all our enjoyments, and pull down sorrow, and shame, and ruin upon us, with this sad *emphasis*, that it is all the work of our own hands.

BUT

BUT that, on the contrary, *religion* is a very wife and regular design, which is every way calculated for our interest, which directly promotes all our happiness, not only in the *next* life, but, all that is possible and that can be reasonably expected, in this. Agreeably hereunto *Solomon* tells us of *wisdom* (which is a word he often uses to express *religion* by, because all other projects without religion are in truth nothing else but folly and vanity) that *in her right hand is length of days, and in her left riches and honour*. That *her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace**. And a greater than *Solomon* declares, that he that seeks *first the kingdom of GOD, and his righteousness, all these things, that is, all worldly advantages, shall be added unto us*. So likewise, *St. Paul* assures us, that (if we are to be moved in point of profit) *religion* is the most *profitable* thing in the world: For *godliness is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come*.

ST. PETER here in the *text* gives us one very considerable instance of the *profitableness* of *religion*, as to the happiness of this life, in that it frees us from the evils and mischiefs, which an ill-natured and malicious world is apt to bring upon men. *Who is he that will harm you, if you be followers of that which is*

* Prov. iii. 16, 17.

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good? i.e. "If you do sincerely practise all the duties of the *Christian* life; If, as the *Apostle* expresses it, (in the words of the *Psal-mist*, a little before the *text*) you refrain your tongue from evil, and your lips that they speak no guile; If you eschew evil, and do good, if you seek peace and ensue it, who is he that will harm you? i.e. no one will harm you. *Good men* will abhor it, *bad men* will be under no sort of temptation to do it."

My design is to illustrate the *truth* contained in these words, by shewing that it is so far from being a just objection against *religion*, that it is an enemy to our *worldly ease* and interest, that on the contrary, it is the great supporter of our *esteem* and credit in the world; that it directly tends to procure us *peace* and *good-will* amongst men; and guards us against the reproaches and affronts, and injuries, which would otherwise fall upon us. And having done this, I will make some practical observations, and so conclude.

I. FIRST then I am to shew, that *religion* is the great *safe-guard* of human life, that one thing, which alone makes us *dwell in peace and safety*, that skreens us from the evils and mischiefs that daily threaten us from a wicked world.

BUT before I shew the truth of this, 'tis requisite to state the *bounds* and limits of this

this *privilege* here belonging to good men; how, and in what latitude of sense this, and the like promises are to be understood by us, that so we may see how far, and in what cases we may or may not depend upon them for our security.

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AND there is the more reason for this, because the words of the *Apostle* in the *text*, seem to carry in them a strict and positive meaning, as if all good men were under an *absolute protection*, and that they were *intirely* secured from all hurts or injuries whatsoever. But to understand the words of the *text* thus, is plainly to destroy the truth of them, by extending them to a sense that is absolutely false; for no *good man* did ever yet experience the truth of them, in this sense. And the very best of men, the *Patriarchs*, and *Prophets*, and *Apostles*; the holy *Martyrs*, and *Confessors*, are so many plain and undeniable instances to the contrary: Nay, that most *just* and *holy One*, the blessed *Jesus* our *Saviour*, who *knew* no *sin*, but *fulfilled all righteousness*, was after all *taken*, and by *wicked hands* *crucified* and *slain*.

INDEED this is too high a privilege for this world, and can never take place in it, but by a constant *series* of miracles to ensure it: For whilst there is sin and folly in the world, there must be mischief; there will be oppression, and fraud, and violence; whilst good men live and converse in such a world, as is
utterly

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utterly minded to do them mischief, 'tis impossible they should receive none from it, without a constant miracle to defend them. They may as reasonably expect to be in a fire and not to be burnt, as to live in a wicked and injurious world, and be wholly exempt from injuries. But GOD has no where promised to sustain us altogether by miracles, and to suspend the course of nature for our relief. GOD did not do this under the law, where temporal blessings were the only rewards expressly promised to good men, and much less under the Gospel, where over and above these, we have the never failing promise of an exceeding weight of glory hereafter.

BUT moreover, as such a *total* security from all evils is repugnant to the ordinary course of things in the world, as it now stands, and cannot be without a miracle, without a *flaming sword*, for instance, or a *cloudy pillar* constantly to attend good men, and protect them from the wicked: So 'tis a *privilege* they are by no means capable of in this life; because 'tis altogether inconsistent with their present circumstances and condition in this world; For *this life* is properly a state of trial to good men, to improve them, and train them up in the exercise of all those virtues and graces, that are the proper qualifications for the happiness of the *next life*; and one considerable part of this *trial* consists in the exercise of those virtues which plainly suppose injuries, such

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such as meekness, and patience, and forgiveness; to *love* our *enemies*, to *bless*, and *pray* for those that *hate* us, to *do good* to them that despitefully use us, and *persecute* us. For these are all *passive* virtues, which can be of no use at all, nor receive any improvement whilst we have no hurt or injury at all done us.

FOR sufferings are the great glory and ornament of patience; and *humility* and *meekness* borrow all their lustre from the *affronts* and calumnies of other men: So that if good men were *wholly* secure from injuries, they must be deprived of the most illustrious instances of goodness, and want those *qualifications* which do most effectually recommend them to the love and favour of GOD: Such a *privilege* would be in truth an *unhappiness* instead of a blessing; their trial would want one half of its perfection; they could not possibly be so completely virtuous, so thoroughly furnished to good works as they might be. This therefore cannot possibly be the meaning of the *Apostle* in the *text*; the words cannot be taken in an *absolutely* strict sense, as importing a *total* immunity to good men from all harms and injuries whatsoever; but with such *restrictions* and limitations, as will make them consistent with the necessary circumstances of the world, with the stated methods of *Providence*, with the main end and design of *religion*, which is men's improvement

ment in all virtuous dispositions, in order to their *eternal happiness* in heaven.

AND thus indeed it is, that all other *temporal* promises (whether of health, or riches, or honour, or of what kind soever) are to be understood, *viz.* As reasonable encouragements, and the most *probable* results of a *godly* life, not as the strict *rewards* or necessary never-failing effects of it.

AND yet even in this *restrained* sense, the words of the *text* do contain in them a promise of a very singular blessing to good men; such as is sufficient to keep up their spirits, and encourage their hopes, and excite their diligence in the ways of virtue and goodness. For 'tis plainly this,—*viz.* “ That if any
 “ thing can, *religion* will keep us out of harm's
 “ way; that considering all things, it is the most
 “ *likely* course we can possibly take for our
 “ present ease and security, having a *direct*
 “ *tendency* in its own nature, and by the blessing
 “ of GOD, to free us from all evils, and to
 “ make us as *securely* happy as this mortal
 “ state is capable of.” And this I am sure is a very great and distinguishing *privilege* that belongs to good men above the wicked, whose ways are all beset with briars and thorns, and directly lead to misery and destruction. If bad men suffer harm, 'tis but natural that they should do so; their words, their works call it to them; 'tis the proper consequence, the just recompence of their own doings.

BUT *who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* Is it not unnatural that it should be so? For who should hurt them that do no hurt? Every one must needs do them this justice, to own that they have a fair *claim* and title to better usage. And this I take to be the true meaning of the *Apostle* in this place, which I am now farther to confirm and illustrate.

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1. *First* then, I say, that *religion*, wherever 'tis truly embraced and practised, has a natural and *direct tendency* to do men good, and secure them from all *harm* and injuries; and this will evidently appear from these following considerations.

1. *First*, FROM the nature of *religion* in general, and the main end and design of it among men.

2. *Secondly*, FROM a great many *particular instances* of *duty*, to the practice of which, *religion* does strictly oblige those who profess it.

1. *First*, FROM the nature of religion in general; and this is no other than the nature of GOD himself, the blessed Author of it, whose peculiar character it is, that he *is good* and *does good*. For *religion* being only a *transcript* of this divine original, the mind and will of GOD *exemplified* and made legible, in the lives and actions of men, it must consequently have the same good properties and effects, and be highly beneficial in promoting

moting the peace and welfare of mankind: And it was for this very end and purpose that GOD at first gave and planted *it* among men, that *thereby* they might be partakers of a Divine Nature, to regulate their desires and curb their passions, and to teach them to live with a due regard to the just and equal dictates of their reason.

AND this is a truth universally acknowledged, that *religion* is ever to be looked upon as the great support and *basis* of human society; *that* which joins men's minds and reconciles their divided interests, and gives them a mutual trust and dependance upon one another, for their good. For wisdom or *religion* is a *loving spirit*, as GOD is *love*; and where love is, there must needs be unity. For *love casteth out fear*, with all those restless and *tormenting* passions of hatred, and malice and revenge that attend it, which naturally beget strife and variance, and cruelty; and as naturally end in the ruine and destruction of men.

BUT *there is no fear in love*, *this* is a steady principle of peace and union, *that* creates no jealousies, *that* raises no terrors, excites no boistrous hurtful passions, but is all candor, and kindness, and good offices to all the world. It must be confessed indeed, that, notwithstanding *religion*, men are but too apt to hurt and *injure* one another, but still *this* is a mighty check even upon bad men, and

restrains them very often from doing mischief when nothing else could restrain them. And were it not for this, the world would be, as the Prophet speaks, *a howling wilderness*; the societies of men would presently disband, and they would become Wolves and Tygers to one another.

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BUT above all, this is the proper *genius*, and peculiar design of the *Christian religion*, to smoothe the spirits, and soften the rugged tempers of men, and make them dwell together in unity. For this is that *Gospel of peace*, which diffuses a spirit of universal love and kindness, and good-will among men, and makes a beneficent, harmless, inoffensive temper the distinguishing *mark* and badge of its professors. *By this*, says *Christ*, *shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have love one to another*. So that if this was made the *rule* of men's lives and actions (as 'tis plainly their duty and interest to make it so) the world would be a perfect *paradise*, all men would be innocently studious of mutual good, no one could receive any harm or injury, because no one would have the will or inclination to do it. It is but too evident indeed, that the *Gospel* does in many instances fail of producing these good effects; and that though it *naturally* tends to promote the peace and welfare of all men, yet the unbridled lusts and passions of some do as *naturally* hurry them on to offer wrong and

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violence

violence, and disturb the peace and quiet of others.

BUT then this is the great comfort and encouragement of all that truly embrace and practise *it*, that whilst *wicked men* are bent on mischief, *they* have still the *security* of their own well-doing, being ingaged in those ways and methods which are the most proper, and do most effectually conduce to their own *safety*. *Evil-doers* may, and do certainly exclude themselves from all the benefits of *religion*, and are justly exposed to receive all the injuries they create, and are so forward to bring upon others: But *good men* feel all the advantages and comforts of it, and have great reason to rejoice in its protection, whilst they follow the directions that *religion* gives them for the conduct of their lives and actions. And this brings me in the next place,

2. Secondly, To instance in some *particular duties* of *religion* that have a plain and direct tendency in them, to raise our esteem in the world, and that do naturally influence the minds of men, not to do us any hurt: Not but that this is in a greater or less degree true, of all and every part and branch of *religion*, for *all her paths are peace*; but there are some, 'tis plain, that have a more immediate and *visible tendency* this way than others, such as are the duties of the *second table*, which chiefly concern our *civil life*, and conversation among men.

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THOSE duties which are immediately owing to GOD and *ourselves*, are indeed of singular use and advantage to us in this respect, in-
somuch, that whoever is a devout worshipper of GOD, a strict observer of his ordinances, zealously concerned for the honour of his name, a constant attendant upon the public worship of GOD, as well in receiving the *sacrament* of the *LORD's supper*, as in performing the other holy offices of his *house*, does thereby gain a secret love among men, and strikes them with a *reverence* for him; so that few care to offer violence to such an one, lest haply they should be found to *fight against GOD*. And a *sober* and *chaste* behaviour is found by experience to keep us out of the way of those *fatal* mischiefs, which *drunkenness* and *lust* seldom fail of bringing upon men.

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AND yet still this is more remarkably true of those duties of *religion*, which, as I said, have a direct relation to our *neighbours*, and do properly concern our *common* dealing and conversation among men; because these are duties that *others* have an immediate *interest* in as well as *ourselves*; which all that are about us do constantly reap the benefit, or feel the want of. And therefore must needs have a stronger influence, and more sensibly affect them; and engage them not to hurt or disturb us in the exercise of those virtues, which themselves and all the world are the better for. And

these are, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are lovely, and of good report, whatsoever things make for the peace and safety, and the common good and benefit of all men; for these are useful and sociable principles, and want nothing else but to be well practised: They are all innocent and obliging, and have nothing in them that can reasonably provoke the hatred, or raise the displeasure of any one against us.

AND whoever wishes well to himself cannot but desire for his *own interest* sake, to have a person of such a character, for his friend or neighbour, or his constant correspondent upon all occasions. Truth, and justice, and honesty, are indeed, to our shame, no very fashionable virtues; and yet they do still make a shift, and always will, to keep up an *esteem* and reputation in the world, and wherever they are found they give a lovely and charming *grace* and ornament to a man, and draw upon him the eyes and affections of all that are about him.

FOR as little as men care to practise these things *themselves*, they cannot but approve and highly value them in *others*. And a man of probity, and sincerity, that is just and upright in all his dealings; that always speaks the truth from his heart, that is faithful to his word, to his promises, to all his engagements; that scorns falshood and flattery, and to
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stoop to the *little arts* of *sophistry* and dissimulation, for his own advantage, or to the disadvantage of others; will ever be a *more acceptable* person, and stand fairer in the opinion of all men, than a *liar* and a *hypocrite*; than one that has no regard to common honesty; than a cruel oppressor, a deceitful dealer, or an extortioner, even his enemies themselves being judges. For these are things that speak home to the reason and to the *consciences* of all men; and seldom fail of extorting this confession, even from the very worst, that the inward sense and language of their souls is for them.

And common experience plainly shews this; that as bad as the world is, the generality do so hold on the side of truth and honesty that (excepting their own particular case) they would have them *universally* observed, and never excuse the violation of them in others. Liars naturally hate liars, and knaves perfidiousness; and hypocrites are very sincere in their protestations against hypocrites; and the unjust man's stomach rises to see the injustice and base practices of others: And every man breathing hates to be imposed upon by *crafty* speeches; to be wronged and cheated and oppressed by *fraudulent* pretences; and this, I say, is a plain demonstration, that the *voice* of *nature* is against these things; that all men whatsoever look upon them as reproaches to reason, and as the common grievances of society, since they all agree in their complaints

and detestation of such practices, and every one in his turn seeks for a remedy against them, and would be glad to see the *good old paths* of truth and honesty.

So THAT in short, when all is done, *honesty* is the safest principle we can choose, and the *best policy*; 'tis what is likely to make us the *most* friends and create the *fewest* enemies. For plain truth and sincerity have such a dove-like innocence in them, as cannot possibly excite men's fears or jealousies of us; exact justice and uprightness in all our dealings, are so much the desire of all men, that converse with us, that they cannot by any means become the objects of their hatred or revenge; these are things that prevent men's angry passions, and keep them in good temper, by giving them all possible assurance that we mean no harm to them, and therefore either their own interest, or good nature, or indeed *very shame* will constrain them not to do any harm to us.

AGAIN another good quality, which *religion* obliges us to, is an easy and peaceable disposition, that we study to be *quiet and mind our own business*, and endeavour *as much as lyes in us, to live peaceably with all men*. Now such a temper as this engages us, with respect to the *publick*, to live in a regular subjection to our *superiors*, to reverence their authority, and pay a ready and dutiful obedience to their commands. And in our *private* capacity to use all
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candour and sweetness of behaviour towards our equals and inferiors. So that 'tis matter of strict duty and conscience with us, not to disturb the *publick tranquillity* of the state in which we live, by propagating factious principles, or joining in any seditious practices whatsoever; nor to breed confusion among our neighbours, by setting about *false reports*, or even *ill natur-ed truths*, which may raise jealousies, and foment differences, and provoke them to *bate* and hurt one another.

BUT on the contrary to heal divisions, and compose quarrels and animosities, and give the world an example (when 'tis our own case) how easily we can *forgive* and *forget* provocations, how little friends we are to strife and debate, what strong inclinations we have to avoid all differences, or, if any happen, to have them speedily made up by mutual engagements to *peace* and *unity*. Now what *harm* can there possibly be to us in all this? Whom can this disturb or provoke? Can *moderation* in us beget *fury* in others? Or patience, revenge? or meekness, cruelty? No man certainly can be such an enemy to peace, as to *bate* and abuse us purely because we *love* it; because we conscientiously observe and practise it; because we study by all means to promote and propagate it. There is no creature in nature *so savage* as not to be sensibly affected with *kindness*, and made *tame* and tractable by *gentle usage*; and it would be very strange indeed, if a sense of honour, or even



common humanity, should not do us the same justice among men, who are of the same society, and have the *same interests* in common with ourselves.

AS LITTLE of good-will as there is among men, daily experience will still make good this observation, that while men move quietly and peaceably within their own spheres, and leave the publick to its proper management, they are in no danger of *rods* and *axes*. Turbulent spirits only, such as fly in the face of authority, and are for changing the established rules of *government* for new *schemes* of their own, are made the wretched examples of *publick* vengeance. For rulers, as St. Paul says, are *not a terror to good works, but to the evil*. And in our *private conversation*, we find, that an angry and contentious person, a tale-bearer, a slanderer, a busy body in other men's matters, is always looked upon as the common *nuisance* of his neighbourhood; he is *accused of all*, he is *condemned of all*.

SUCH a man's practice is a direct forfeiture of all courteous and civil usage, and if he moreover smarts and suffers for his injurious behaviour, 'tis what in all reason and justice he ought to expect, since he first shewed the way, and gave the provocation. But a *soft tongue breaketh the bone*; civil language and a candid inoffensive demeanour sweeten men's passions, and melts them down into love and kindness. He that *speaks evil* of no man has a just claim to every man's *good words*, because he provokes

no one to speak evil of him: He that never willingly *gives* any affronts, but always *takes* them, and requites them with good nature and civility, blunts the edge even of malice itself, and either *wins*, or *shames* it into a reconciliation. For malice is kept alive only by ill-nature and resistance, but it droops and dies where it meets with soft and gentle usage.

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A PEACEABLE man is so far from being odious and distastful to his neighbours, that all sides are generally well agreed in their good opinion of him; and men, that know not how to make up matters between themselves, are glad to appeal to his *arbitration*, for a conclusion of their differences: Every man that pretends to *fair dealing* reckons himself *safe* in his hands, and readily ventures to stand to his *decisions*: And *bad men* know not how to decline such an *umpire*, being ashamed to bring so much suspicion on their cause, as not to dare trust it with *him*, whom all men allow, will do no man any wrong. Now he, that is thus excellently useful in making *friendship* among others, cannot surely fail of making *friends* to himself: For *the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace* *.

ALL MEN find it their interest to support and encourage *such* principles, because they all share more or less in the good effects of them. *Blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called the*

* James iii. 18.

children

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children of GOD *. All good men will rise up and call them blessed. This is a quality so godlike that the most outrageous temper cannot but admire, and *ill-nature* itself must be forced to commend : This will even *charm* down envy and lay fetters upon revenge ; and will take from the very worst of men, both the will and power of doing us any hurt.—What remains of this discourse I shall defer to another opportunity.

Now to GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY GHOST, THREE PERSONS and ONE ever blessed GOD, be ascribed, as is most due, all honour, dominion, and praise, now and evermore. *Amen.*

* Mat. v. 9.

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S E R M O N X.

Religion the best Security against the Dangers and Mischiefs of Life.

1 P E T. iii. 13.

Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

IN a discourse I lately made to you upon SERMON
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these words I observed, that St. *Peter* here gives us one very considerable instance of the profitableness of religion, with regard to the happiness of *this life*, in that it frees us from the evils and mischiefs which an ill-natured and malicious world is apt to bring upon men. *Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* That is, “ If you do sincerely practise all the duties of the *Christian life* :—If, as he expresses it, (in the words of the *Psalmist*) a little before the text, *If you refrain your tongue from evil,*
2 “ and

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“ and your lips that they speak no guile; If you
 “ eschew evil, and do good, if you seek peace and
 “ ensue it, who is he that will harm you? That is,
 “ no one will harm you. Good men will abhor
 “ it, and bad men will be under no tempta-
 “ tion to do it.”

MY design, I told you, was to *illustrate* the truth contained in these words, by shewing, that it is so far from being a just objection to *religion*, as if it was an enemy to our *worldly ease* and interest, that on the contrary, it is the great *supporter* of our *esteem* and credit in the world, that it *directly* tends to procure us *peace* and good will among men, and guards us against the reproaches, affronts, and injuries which would otherwise fall upon us. And then to make some *practical* observations.

BEFORE I began to shew that *religion* is thus the *safeguard* of human life, and screens us from the mischiefs that daily threaten us from a wicked world, I stated the *bounds* of this privilege of good men, by shewing in what latitude of sense *this*, and the like promises are to be understood by us, that we may see, how far, and in what cases, we may or may not depend upon them for our security: And I proved to you, that the words of the *Apostle* cannot possibly be taken in a *strict* sense, as importing a *total immunity* to good men from all injuries whatsoever, but with such restrictions and limitations, as will make them consistent with the necessary circumstances of the world,
 with

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with the stated methods of providence, and with the main end and design of *religion*. SERMON
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I THEN proceeded to confirm and illustrate this doctrine of the *Apostle*, from the following considerations.

1. *First*, FROM the nature of *religion* in general, and the main end and design of it among men.

2. *Secondly*, FROM a great many particular instances of *duty*, to the practice of which *religion* does strictly oblige those who profess it.

I DISPATCHED the *first* head, and good part of the *second*, but the time not allowing me to finish it, I propose now to lay before you what remains upon that head; as also the several *practical observations* I promised to make from the whole. To proceed then.

ANOTHER useful principle which *religion* teaches us is that of *charity*—The very bond of peace, and of all virtues, the best natured and the most obliging quality in the world: For, *charity suffereth long and is kind, charity envieth not, charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things* *.

NOW, where is that *Barbarian* that can spy any manner of provocation in all this, or

* 1 Cor. iii. 4, 5, 6, 7.

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can find in his heart to do violence to a person endued with so *amiable* a quality? For here is no pride, no insolent contempt of others, no rudeness of behaviour, no selfish designs, no spiteful resentments, which are the things that *naturally* beget ill-will, and are the *usual* incentives to rage and violence; but on the contrary, here is a constant air of *meekness*, and *condescension*, and tender compassion for the infirmities of others; a readiness always to put the *fairest* construction upon things, and a hearty desire to see all men as good, and as happy, and as much at ease, as he himself desires to be.

IN a word, here is a firm purpose not to *return evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrarywise blessing*. A resolution of silencing men's passions by convincing their reason; an overcoming of evil with good, which is the most generous, the most *obliging conquest*, in the world.

ADD to all these, that other excellent property of *charity*, namely a readiness of mind and will, as we have opportunity, to *do good* unto all men; to the *bodies* as well as the *souls* of men. To their *souls*, by comforting the weak, instructing the ignorant, kindly admonishing, and gently reproving those that are out of the way, and that go astray from their *duty*. And to their *bodies*, by visiting the sick, clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, relieving the oppressed, and a liberal provision for the poor and needy.

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Now these are all such instances, as do naturally engage men's affections, they draw them into our interests, and compel them as it were to a kind and civil treatment of us. *The liberal person deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand.* Thus *Job* tells us from his own experience, *When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me it gave witness to me, because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him* *. Men cannot but wish well to that person, in whom goodness and power are so happily united; that has not only great abilities, but as great a will also, and as strong an inclination to do good. Those that are above his charity themselves cannot forbear to applaud, if not to imitate it: And indeed considering the uncertainty of human affairs, how many casualties there, are that may unexpectedly render us the objects of other men's compassion, it is but common prudence to make him our friend, whose peculiar character it is, that *he is a friend in adversity*; and it is but common humanity, not to do evil to him who is a common benefactor.

ST. LUKE gives us a very remarkable instance of this kind, in the *Centurion*, whose sick Servant was healed by our blessed Saviour†. There the *Elders* of the *Jews* turn petitioners to *Christ* in behalf of one that was a *Gentile*, and instantly

* *Job* xxix. 11, 12. † *Luke* vii. 3, 4, 5.

beseech

beseech our blessed Saviour, that he would come and heal his Servant, saying, that he was worthy for whom he should do this; for HE LOVETH OUR NATION, AND HATH BUILT US A SYNAGOGUE : This they looked upon as such a noble character of a man, as must recommend him to all men's esteem and friendship, and in point of justice, deserve and challenge whatever kindness it was in any one's power to do him. Such a publick spirit, they thought, had a right to publick acknowledgments, and was worthy to be gratified even at the expence of a miracle, in what he requested.

AND this is in truth the common sense of mankind to this day, and as long as human nature lasts, the genuine language of it will ever be this—That he that does *no* injuries to others ought to have *none* done to him; that he that does things that are good, and *profitable* unto men, should have *praise* of the same, and meet with a suitable return of kindness and goodwill from all the world.

AND thus I have endeavoured, as briefly as I could, to confirm to you the truth of what the *Apostle* here lays down in the *text*, by instancing in some particular *duties* of *religion*, which have a *natural* and direct tendency in them to advance our interest and esteem in the world, and as much as is possible in this state of things, to secure us from all *harm* and injury.

BUT

BUT besides that these and other duties of *religion* (which I cannot now mention) are thus serviceable in their own *nature*, to promote our peace among men; they have moreover the *blef-
sing* of GOD attending them, to render them still more successful and more effectual *instruments* of our good; For *the eyes of the LORD are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers*; as the *Apostle* tells us from the *Psalmist* in the *verse* before my *text*. And the same holy *Psalmist* assures us—That *the LORD bath pleasure in the prosperity of his Servants*; and that to this end,—*The Angel of the LORD encampeth round about them, and delivereth them*—That *many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivereth him out of all*. That *he keepeth all his bones, that not one of them is broken*.—That *evil shall slay the wicked, and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate*.—But that *the LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate* *. And thus it is that *Solomon* tells us, *When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him* †.

A just and good Providence is most immediately concerned to keep up a plain distinction between *good* and *evil*, and to maintain the cause of the righteous (which is indeed in a true sense his *own cause*) by protecting them

* Psalm xxxiv. † Prov. xvi. 7.

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from the rage and malice of the wicked; and a wise Providence knows full well how to do this; by making all things work together for their good. Their enemies may give them frequent disturbances, and proudly insult over them, and plot their ruin by lies and calumnies; but it is a righteous thing with GOD to recompense tribulation to them that trouble them, and to them, who are troubled, rest. GOD *shall hide them in his tabernacle, in the secret place of his dwelling—And shall lift up their heads above their enemies, as David speaks **.

HE can defeat the most *subtile* designs of their enemies, and confound them in their own malice, and *force* them for their own ease and interest's sake to enter into friendship with them. The *thoughts* of all men's hearts, and *all* their ways are so perfectly under his power and government, that he *turneth them whithersoever he will*, and therefore will most certainly turn them to the advantage of those who love him, and are *followers of that which is good*. So that wicked men do but in vain attempt *their* ruin and disgrace: It is only to expose their own folly and impotence: For *the counsel of the LORD, that will stand*.

AND therefore we find the Jewish Council readily agreeing to Gamaliel's advice concerning the Apostles, *Refrain from these men, says he, and let them alone: For if this counsel, or*

* Psalm

this

this work be of GOD, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against GOD.* SERMON
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THE SCRIPTURE labours with instances of this nature; I shall briefly lay before you one or two of them. What design could be more exquisitely contrived, and more likely to succeed in the ruin of *righteous men*, than a *burning fiery furnace*? and yet even *this*, though *beated* to the greatest degree, refused to be the executioner of the *no less beated* and enraged malice of men upon the servants of GOD. It only yielded an *innocent warmth* to the *three confessors*, but turned all its *rage* against their persecutors, and in an instant *slew* those who put them into it.

AND the case of *Daniel* is no less remarkable, where *savage* and *hungry* lions, instead of devouring him, did *tamely* submit to be his *guardians*. — And the *dumb* and *naturally* cruel beasts thus effectually rebuked the fury and the *madness* of the people against him †.

How could there be a more malicious contrivance, and strengthened with greater authority, than that of *Haman* to destroy *Mordecai* and all the *Jews*? And yet how strangely did good Providence order matters? That *Haman* in all this should only procure the *advancement* of *Mordecai*, and his *own* ruin. In the net which he hid privily was his foot taken, and he

* Acts v. 38, 39. † Dan. iii. vi. chapters.

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was snared in the work of his own hands. As his wife told him, so it proved at last.—If this Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him. Accordingly Haman's head was lifted up upon the gallows fifty cubits high, which he had made for Mordecai, and Mordecai advanced to the highest honour and power that a subject was capable of receiving *.

BUT farther, as GOD shews himself in the protection of good men, by frustrating the furious designs of their enemies, and breaking the power of the ungodly and malicious, by making second causes to forget, if I may so say, their natural powers, when they are employed as instruments to do them mischief; so he does often take away from men the very will to hurt them, by influencing their passions, so as even to turn their hatred into love and kindness towards them. We have in Scripture two notable instances of this in the case of Jacob, when he fled from Laban and came to meet his brother Esau.

LABAN, we find, was highly incensed at his departure, and hotly pursued him with an intent to be revenged on him; but when he overtook him and 'twas in his power to do him hurt, he then had no longer the will to do it. GOD had in a dream pacified his anger, and quite altered his resolutions; so that he spake neither good nor bad to him; i. e. He did not

• Esther.

proceed

proceed from good words to bad with him, he expressed *no angry* resentments nor desires of revenge; but only desired a *solemn covenant* between them, of a friendly agreement and correspondence for the future *.

AND thus when *Esau* received the notice of *Jacob's* return, he presently went out with four hundred men to meet him, at which news *Jacob* was greatly afraid and distressed; for it was doubtless with *no good* intent, that he brought so many with him. 'Tis highly probable his design was to have wreaked his malice upon *Jacob* for that *old grudge* that he bare him, for his having *supplanted him* in his Father's blessing, and in his *birthright*. But, upon their meeting *Esau's* heart was *strangely* turned quite another way in him; so that, laying aside all the terrors of *hostility*, he received him with all the *tendernefs* and brotherly affection imaginable—*Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him* †.

SOME of these instances, I confess, that I have here laid before you, are of an *extraordinary* nature, and not according to the fixed rules and methods of *Providence*; so that every good man is not, in reason, to expect the *like deliverances* in the *like* circumstances: But this is however certain, that whatsoever things were done and written afore time, were *written for our learning*, that we *through patience and com-*

* Gen. xxxi, † Gen. xxxiii.

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SERMON *fort of the Scriptures might have hope, as the A-*
X. *pistle tells us.*

AND these instances are *ensamples* to us thus far of hope and comfort, that while we continue in a conscientious discharge of our *duty*, GOD will never be wanting in his *fatherly* care, some way or other, as he sees best, to succour and protect us; *for the righteous LORD loveth righteousness, his countenance does behold the upright* *.

AND thus I have shewn, and as briefly as I could, both from the nature of *religion* in general, and from *particular* instances of *duty*, which it enjoins, and from the *blessing* of GOD that attends them, that *good men* are under the best protection and have the *greatest security* from all harms and injuries, that this mortal state is capable of. It only remains that I now apply what has been said, by making a *practical observation* or two, and so conclude this subject.

I. *First*, FROM what has been said we may observe, how highly we are indebted to a wise and good GOD for our *religion*; and withal what great reason we have diligently to observe and practise it. Since he has so admirably contrived it to answer all our reasonable desires, and fully to gratify our natural propensions to our own *ease* and *safety*. So that we are not only to live in the exercise of it, upon the *faith*

* Psalm xij.

and

and *hope* of a *future* reward, but we do likewise receive a *present* recompence, and find a *reward* so closely interwoven with every branch of our *duty*, that whilst we *follow after that which is good* we pursue our own *interest*, and do most effectually provide for our own *peace* and security. Because whatever is required of us by way of duty, as *morally* good, is likewise *naturally* good to us in its effects and consequences. So that as long as we adhere to truth and *goodness*, we are *safe* and fenced from all dangers; and then only expose ourselves to receive *harm* from others, when we leave the paths of uprightness and wander in the crooked ways of sin and wickedness—*He that walketh uprightly, walketh securely; but he that perverteth his ways shall be known* *. *The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them; but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness* †. And therefore,

2. *Secondly*, FROM hence we may observe, what great matter of *comfort* and satisfaction it must needs be to *good men*, that while they follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, and such virtues; though they live in the midst of a wicked world, and dwell among men that are enemies unto peace and goodness, yet they have no reason to be *afraid* of their *terrors*, or to be *troubled*; since *these virtues* are, in a great measure, their security,

* Prov. x. 9. † xi. 6.

SERMON and will, in most cases, set them out of the reach
 X. of all harm and violence. Their lives being
 such as do not only *not provoke* injuries, but directly tend to *compose* men's *passions*, and divert their fury, and put them into good humour with them: For so is the will of GOD, that by *well-doing they may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, and win them over by their good conversation in Christ*, (as the *Apostle* speaks.)

WHEREAS, on the contrary, you see daily what fatal mischiefs wicked men bring upon themselves, by forsaking these principles. You find generally that *pride goes before destruction, and haughtiness before a fall*: That passion and ill nature makes very friends become enemies; that a covetous and sordid temper marks men out for publick contempt and infamy; that fraud and oppression bring the cursed fate of *Ismael* upon them, and arm every man's hand against them, to chastise or destroy them. And then farther to consider that, besides what men's virtues can do for them in the *natural course* of things, they have the *GOD of Jacob for their refuge*, to protect and defend them, *this* must needs mightily confirm them in their virtuous resolutions, and give them the greatest encouragement imaginable to persist steadfast unto the end.

3. *Thirdly*, FROM what I said at first, in the explaining the words of the text, it appears, that though *good men* do sometimes *suffer* for well-doing, and notwithstanding all their virtuous endeavours,

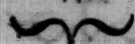
endeavours, are oppressed and *injured* by the *wicked*; yet this is no just objection against providence in this particular, nor any contradiction to the doctrine here delivered in the text; because, as I said, 'tis not an *absolute* protection that is here promised, at all times, and in all cases whatsoever (which is a privilege that belongs only to an absolutely good and perfect state) but *such a protection* as is consistent with the main design of religion in a state of *trial* and improvement.

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'Tis a very great enouragement to piety and goodness in *this world*, that, *generally* speaking, virtue carries its own reward along with it; that as certainly as the diligent hand maketh rich, or any other moral causes produce their proper effects, so doth truth, and justice, and honesty; so does a meek, and peaceable, and charitable disposition *tend* to raise our esteem among men, and *skreen* us from all *harm* and injury: But still they do sometimes fail of this effect, *the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor favour to men of skill*; good men may sometimes suffer from the wicked, only to promote a greater good which providence intends them, than their not suffering would be to them; to try their sincerity and constancy; to exercise their faith, and patience, and charity; to render their virtues more conspicuous, and expose the malice of their enemies; that *whereas they speak evil of them*

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*them as of evil-doers, they may by their good works, which they shall behold, glorify GOD**. So that their present sufferings do only make their virtues the more effectual to their future security, by convincing all men of their innocency, and fixing in their minds a good opinion of their *real worth* and integrity.

4. *Lastly*, FROM what has been said it appears, that when good men suffer harm it is not purely on the account of their *goodness*, but because they either *want* that goodness they pretend to, or labour under a great many imperfections which render it ineffectual to their own security; so that their *failings*, and not their *virtues*, draw down injuries and mischiefs upon them.

A PEACEABLE man, for instance, may be somewhat defective in the point of *integrity*, and a just man may want some degrees of charity, and then 'tis not strange if sometimes harm befalls him, when his *virtues* have such an allay of so great imperfections mixt with them; for these are a constant *slur* upon his *virtues*, and diminish much of the strength and beauty of them; they are like *dead flies*, which (as the wise man observes) cause *the ointment of the Apothecary to send forth a stinking savour* †. Men know not how heartily to respect a person that is *partially* only, and not *uniformly* good; who makes a fair shew of goodness in

* 1 Pet. ii. 12. † Eccl. x. 1.

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some instances, but regards it not in *others*. In-
deed 'tis much if such an one, instead of be-
ing esteemed, is not hated and abused, because
he lyes very open to the suspicion of being a
hypocrite in those very instances of goodness
that he pretends to.

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BUT if we would have *religion* do service to
our reputation, and establish our security, and
preserve us from evils, we must be *thoroughly fur-*
nished to all good works, and *put on the whole ar-*
mour of GOD, and then we may hope to stand
secure in the evil day, and be able *to quench all*
the fiery darts of the wicked *.

TO CONCLUDE then, let us but once make it
plain to the world, that we are *truly* and *sincerely*
good, that we heartily love truth, justice, and
honesty, that we *follow peace with all men*,
that a spirit of meekness, and forbearance: and
universal charity is the *ruling principle* of our
lives, and influences all our dealings with o-
thers; let these virtues, I say, be seen in
all our words and actions, in governing our
passions, in tempering our discourse, in model-
ling our behaviour; in an obliging sweetness
and innocency in all our conversation: and
then we may safely *venture* ourselves *abroad*
in an ill natured world, and trust even a *dege-*
nerate age, in most cases, to do us justice.
These virtues, set in a clear light, will charm
the eyes, and engage the affections of all that

* Eph. vi.

behold

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to love and to good works.

AND though (as our present condition is) they cannot give us an *absolute* freedom from all *harm* and injuries, yet they will always make this odds on our side, that whereas wicked men are generally *bated*, we shall be as generally *loved*; as they are despised, we shall be revered; where they run headlong into dangers, and by harming others bring harm upon themselves, we shall be *secure* and out of harm's way, being safely *entrenched* in our own integrity and innocence. This will always be our advantage and our comfort above the rest of the world, that all *good men* will rejoice to do us good; that most *bad men* will be invited to do it, and no man breathing, whether *good* or *bad*, will be under any temptation to do us any *hurt*.

WHEREFORE HE that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil and do good, let him seek peace and ensue it; for the eyes of the LORD are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers. And who is he that will harm you if ye be followers of that which is good?

Now to GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY GHOST, THREE Persons and ONE GOD, be all honour, &c. now and evermore. *Amen.*

SERMON

SERMON XI.

The Eternity of Hell Torments considered.

M A T. xxv. 46.

And these shall go away into everlasting Punishment : But the Righteous into Life eternal.

AS GOD has been graciously pleased to SERMON
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give us a *rule* of faith and manners, for our direction how we may *infallibly* please him and obtain his favour, so has he also condescended to quicken us to a just regard to the *rule* laid before us ; not only by acquainting us in general, that we shall please or displease him, according as we observe or disregard *it* ; but by propounding distinctly the nature and condition of that *happiness* and *misery*, which will be the final issue and result of our conformity to *it*, or our neglect of *it*.

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OUR *passions* may be all made the instruments of our good, if they are duly regulated, and wisely directed. And our *hopes* and *fears* are particularly conducive to this end, when their objects are well chosen, being indeed of all others the most powerful and vigorous *springs of action*. For this reason GOD has propounded the *joys of heaven*, and the *torments of hell*, as the *sanction* of his laws, and to secure the observation of them; that men being thus allured by so glorious a *reward*, and aw'd and alarmed by so horrible and so severe a *punishment*, might be led, and, in a sort, constrained to do their duty, and so be in the end blessed with the enjoyment of *one*, and secured against ever suffering the *other*.

AMONG the many places of *Scripture*, wherein this great *doctrine* of the future rewards and punishments is particularly express'd and enforced, we have a very distinct account of it in our blessed Saviour's most affecting representation of the judgment of the last day, in the latter part of the *chapter* of my *text*, where it is said, that *when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left, and shall say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.—*

And

And he shall say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. — And at the close we have an account of the final issue and execution of this dreadful judgment, in the words of the text—And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.*

My design at this time is to discourse upon the miserable end here threatned to the *wicked*; namely that they *shall go away into everlasting punishment.*

INDEED this is a subject so full of *terror*, that it is an irksome task to treat upon it. And I should think the office of a *Minister of Christ* much more comfortable, if there was no need of speaking so frequently to it as there is found to be: If men would be led into the paths of *virtue and holiness*, from the peace and pleasure that there is in them, and from a regard to the *exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, which is the promised reward of a *religious* life; if they would seriously consider the *baseness* of *sin*, and the *amazing love and tenderness* of *GOD* to us, and be thence persuaded, out of *honour and gratitude*, to obey his will, and so be drawn *with the cords of a man and with the bands of love* †, as the *Prophet* expresses it; but till that happy time comes *the terrors of the LORD* must be sometimes laid before them,

* Matt. xxv. from the 31. verse. † Hof. xi. 4.

and they must be plainly told, *whether they will bear, or whether they will forbear*, that destruction, *eternal destruction*, misery and horror eternal will unavoidably be their portion, if they neglect and despise this *great salvation* which is offered them.

AND they must not only be told of this in *general*, but the kind, and degree, and aggravations of *that punishment* must be laid before them, so far as we have instruction from the *Scriptures* to do it, that no means may be omitted which may any way conduce to the great and important end of our *office*; *the salvation of men's souls*.

IN discoursing upon this subject I propose to do these two things.

I. FIRST, I will consider the *nature* of the punishment threatned in *Scripture* to *impenitent sinners*.

II. SECONDLY, I will vindicate and clear what appears to be the sense of *Scripture* upon this point, by answering the *objections* that are usually made to it.

I. FIRST, I am to shew you in what this *punishment* of sinners threatned in my *text*, and many other parts of *Scripture* does consist.

I. FIRST, *This punishment*, or the torments of hell, are represented in *Scripture*, as consisting, in part, in a sad anguish of mind occasioned by the pangs and throws of a *guilty conscience*,

Hell Torments considered.

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science, called by our blessed Saviour, THE WORM THAT DIETH NOT. GOD Almighty has been pleased so to form our minds, that as a secret pleasure springs up in them, when upon reflection they find they have done what is *right* and reasonable, so a consciousness of having done what is *base* and unrighteous, and contrary to known duty is always attended with *horror* and *disquiet*.

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AND let men endeavour to hide the *secret tortures* of their upbraiding consciences, as much as they can, and guard themselves against their own thoughts by all possible arts and devices, yet, absence from company and the afflictions of a *sick bed*, but especially the apprehensions of *approaching death*, will take off the disguise and set every thing in its true form, before their minds. And then their guilt will have its full power upon them; when their *spirits* are thus wounded within them, truly wretched is their case. *The spirit of a man will bear his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?*

Now if this be the forlorn condition of men, even in this world, when their *consciences* are *let loose* upon them; what consummate misery and distress must theirs be, who are now beyond the power of *redemption*, have neither diversions, to amuse them, nor the least faint hope to support them? If men under a deep sense of the baseness of their actions in this life, have sometimes thought the lashes and *revilings* of their con-

sciences, a pain beyond all others *intolerable*, and the rage of their despair has driven them into downright *frenzy* and distraction; what must their misery be, who are not only under all the agonies now mentioned, but have no glimpse of *hope* of their being ever to be removed, forasmuch as they know the cause of them will ever remain? For there is no *cure* for guilt but *repentance*; and the opportunity for *that* is over with them, never more to return. So that if there was indeed no other *punishment* to be feared hereafter, but this perpetual *sting* of *conscience* (which yet is the natural and necessary consequence of a life of sin and wickedness) this alone has terror enough in it, and hardly any one kind of *torment* can be thought of that is more *exquisite*. But yet,

2. SECONDLY, A *reviling conscience* is but one part of the *misery* of those that forfeit *salvation*; for they will ever be sensible of the great loss, which they sustain in being deprived of the *presence* of GOD for ever. 'Tis not an easy matter to determine which brings more torment along with it, the *loss* of what we passionately love, and eagerly desire, or the suffering any grievous *bodily* pain.

INDEED whilst men continue here under the influence of *sensible* objects, and are surrounded with what strikes and entertains their *fancies*, they have not such a relish for the happiness of the other world, as to regret the present want of it, especially

pecially whilst they are amused and captivated with the pleasures of sin. But when all these things shall be removed far from them, and they find themselves in the depth of destruction, and shall from thence lift up their eyes and see others in *Abraham's bosom* in heaven, and in glory, they will then be able to make a true estimate of their loss, and from thence will the degrees of their happiness increase; when they shall have nothing that can divert them from reflecting thoroughly upon the excellency of that glory from which they are fallen, and upon the folly and frenzy with which they were possessed in bringing upon themselves everlasting destruction from the presence of the LORD, and from the glory of his power*.

FOR then their thoughts will be employ'd in reflecting upon their folly and rashness, in having thus thrown away their souls for trifles, in having deprived themselves of HAPPINESS for no other consideration than that paltry one of serving a worldly interest it may be, or gratifying a brutish lust, or satisfying an angry resentment. How keen will their self-reproaches be, when they recollect that their misery is the plain and evident effect of their *own choice*, even under the strongest convictions of the folly and danger of it, raised in them by the gentle suggestions of GOD's *holy spirit*, by the loud calls and invitations of his *Ministers*, by the many examples of GOD's

* 2 Thes. i. 9.

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vengeance upon sinners in this life, and by the pressing and frequent solicitations of all their sober and serious friends! For every one of these particulars will have its *sting*, and altogether cannot fail of rendring the unhappy sinner of all creatures the most miserable.

AND yet all these and numberless other *instances* of *unhappiness* are but the *natural* and *necessary* effects of a sinful life, provided the souls of wicked men survive their bodies and are conscious of their own exclusion from GOD's presence, and of the happiness of the *righteous* in the kingdom of *glory*.

BUT this is far from being the whole *punishment* that is threatned against sinners. For,

3. THIRDLY, The *Scriptures* do farther most expressly and repeatedly declare, that, besides what has been already mentioned, the punishment of the damned will be heightned by real and *positive pains*: Thus our *Saviour* tells us—*That the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth**. *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire*†.—*It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched*‡.

* Matt. xiii. 40, 41, 42. † Matt. xxv. 41. ‡ Mark ix. 43.

Now whether it be unquestionable that these expressions are to be understood in their ordinary and *obvious* meaning, so as *literally* to denote a *material* fire or no, yet of this we may be certain, that they are designed to set forth the *reality*, and the *intenseness* of the *pains* that will be suffered, by those who shall be so wretched as to be cast into that dreadful *place* of *torment* there mentioned. For it is not conceivable that any words can be devised that can represent horrible *pain*, and the most insupportable *anguish* of body, *more significantly*, and more affectingly than these, and other like expressions of holy Scriptures do.

So THAT this we may be sure of, that if an *earthly fire* be a thing so *dreadful*, as we know it to be, and capable of giving pain of so *intense* a kind, as to be of all others the most intolerable; the *fire* of *hell*, whether *material* or no, must be formed to give anguish and torture, at least equal to what can be occasioned by the most active and *vigorous flame*, and these torments, though they were to continue but a *short season*, would, one would think, carry terror enough with them to alarm the stoutest hearted sinner, and make him start and tremble at his being guilty of what will expose him to the danger of suffering them. But yet,

4. FOURTHLY, There is a circumstance that has not yet been considered, that infinitely heightens and aggravates the *punishment*, and

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makes it to the last degree shocking, which is, that *it never will have an end.*

THOUGH the *pains of hell* are beyond all imagination piercing and exquisite, yet it would be some abatement of their anguish, if there was any *view or hope*, that they would one day cease and be no more. But to be certain that they are as lasting as they are fierce and pungent, and that as their *violence* is infinite, so is their *duration*; this is the very depth of misery, and must plunge the unhappy sufferer into the deepest horror and *despair*.

Now nothing is delivered in the *holy Scriptures* in plainer and more express terms, than this dreadful *eternity of hell torments*. Depart from me, ye cursed, into EVERLASTING fire*;—into the fire that NEVER shall be quenched†. The wicked shall be tormented day and night for EVER and EVER‡. And in the text—These shall go away into EVERLASTING punishment. This is the language of *Scripture*, and this is the truth as we are taught in *Christ Jesus*; and this is therefore, what we must affirm and inculcate upon you, if we will be faithful in the execution of our office. And after such plain and express declarations of GOD upon this subject, it is wonderful, that there should be any questions raised by *Christians* concerning the truth and reality of eternal torments.

* Matt. xxv. 41. † Mark ix. 43. ‡ Rev. xi. 10.

AND

AND yet there have not only been many *doubts* and *scruples* moved concerning the truth of this *doctrine* but some have even dared presumptuously to *affirm*, that the *doctrine* in its strict and obvious meaning, is *absurd*, and inconsistent with the known goodness, and justice, and wisdom of GOD. When I call such assertions as these *strange* in the mouths of *Christians*, I mean such *Christians* as do indeed reverence the *Scriptures*, and seriously believe them to contain the dictates of GOD's *Holy Spirit*. For as to the *Socinians*, who are the *principal* assertors of these *audacious* things, nothing of this kind is to be wondred at in them.

THEY who have the boldness to deny the *Omniscience* and *Omnipotence* of GOD, though attributes agreeable to the notions of men, and to the plain revelations of GOD; *they* who have with eagerness opposed the *capital*, and most strictly FUNDAMENTAL articles of *faith*, and such as support the whole *Christian scheme*, as laid down in the *Scriptures*, and as believed and defended by the *universal Church*; *they* who have the confidence to call every thing in question, that does not exactly comport with their pretended *reason*, and will admit nothing for truth but just what they please, and will hardly vouchsafe to be *saved* but in their *own way*; I do not think it any matter of surprize that *they* should follow their own *genius*, and boldly charge *this doctrine* with absurdity as they do many others, though never so consist-

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BUT in the present point doubtless there have been some of *like sentiment* with them, who were in other respects as far from entering into the *Socinian scheme* as any among the most *orthodox*, and who have also seriously believed and revered the holy *Scriptures* as the *rule* of their *faith* in all points whatsoever. Now for such men as these to raise difficulties against receiving so plain a *doctrine*, is, as I said, matter of just surprize and wonder. However their *pretences* are for that very reason to be duly scanned and examined, and accordingly I propose to do it under my next head of discourse, to which I now come. Namely,

II. SECONDLY, To vindicate and clear what thus appears to be the sense of *Scripture* upon this point, by answering the *objections* usually made to it.

Now it is objected,

1. *First*, THAT there is not a sufficient foundation for the *doctrine* before laid down in the expressions of *Scripture*, alledged for the proof of it.

2. *Secondly*, THAT if it be admitted, that the sense of the expressions of *Scripture* is, as has been represented, yet, that it is not necessary that the *punishments* threatned should be executed.

3. *Thirdly*,

3. *Thirdly*, THAT, however plain the terms may be wherein the *Scriptures* declare the future punishments to be as they are represented, yet that they ought not to be taken in a *strict* meaning, because they would then import what is inconsistent with the known *attributes* of GOD.

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I. FIRST, It is objected, that there is not a sufficient foundation for the *doctrine* before laid down concerning *hell torments*, in the expressions of *Scripture* alledged for the proof of it.

AND if this could be made out I should be among the forwardest to question the truth of the *doctrine*. For certainly a matter of such importance ought not to be rashly gathered from *precarious* principles, or uncertain expressions. But the real case will soon appear, upon an examination of what is pretended. Now that is,

I. *First*, THAT diverse expressions of *Scripture* which relate to this point do directly signify absolute and final *perdition* and *destruction*, and that it is therefore reasonable to understand them as declaring the future punishment of sinners to consist in having an *entire end* put to their beings. The chief *passage*, upon which this extraordinary assertion is founded, is that where our blessed *Saviour* directs his Disciples, *not to fear them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather to fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell*. Now here can be no conclusion drawn from hence



hence in favour of this notion, unless *annihilation* be the only thing that GOD can do with regard to the *destruction* of sinners. For if *he* can destroy them by punishing them for ever with real pain and torture, then *destruction* in this *text*, cannot signify *annihilation* ONLY ; for our Saviour's argument turns entirely upon the difference of *power* in *man* and GOD, and therefore the *destruction* mentioned, must signify the *torment*, and not the *extinction* of soul and body in *hell*, if such torments can with propriety be termed *destruction*. And certainly a man *living* in *misery* may with as good sense and truth be said to be *destroyed*, to *perish* and to be *undone*, as if he was reduced to nothing.

If indeed this was the only *passage* that related to the *future* condition of impenitent sinners, some handle might be taken for making the *construction*, I am examining, but there being so many other places of *Scripture* wherein what is here called the *destruction* of men, is said to be the punishing of them with *real* and never ceasing *pain*, no such construction can possibly be admitted. For if *destruction* of *body* and *soul* imports an *extinction* of them, there is no room for *punishment*, the very *subject* thereof is no more, and then what account can be given of the numerous *texts* of *Scripture*, which so expressly represent the state of the damned, as a state of *suffering* without intermission and without end?

THIS fancy of an *annihilation*, of the souls and bodies of impenitent sinners, has also met with some advocates upon the force of those expressions of *Scripture*, where the *torments of hell* and the state of the damned are represented under the terms of *death*, and the *second death*. For as the rewards of the *righteous* are declared to consist in a *life* that is *everlasting*, so the *death* in which the punishment of the *reprobate* is made to consist, is to be considered, say they, as the *opposite* thereto, and so to import no more than an absolute *end* to *life*, and all its functions.

IN answer hereunto let it be considered that *life everlasting* which is promised to the *righteous* does not consist in a mere opposition to *non-existence*, but is represented always as attended with infinite degrees of bliss and joy, pleasure and delight, and therefore, if a judgment is to be made of the nature of the *second death*, from its *opposition* to the life to which the *righteous* are to be raised, it must not consist in a mere *privation* of life and being, but in a *real* and *positive* suffering the effects of GOD's displeasure in a *life* of *pain* and *torment*. And accordingly the *second death* is expressly called *the lake of fire**: And 'tis said, that *he that overcometh shall not be hurt of it*†.

BUT in what sense the *second death* can be called *a lake of fire*, if it be a mere state of *non-existence*; and how it should in *one place* be

* Rev. xx. 14, 15. † Rev. ii. 11.

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intimated, that they who are *cast into it* shall be HURT by it; and how it should in *another* be expressly said, that they shall be TORMENTED || therein; if the very being cast into it is immediate *extinction*, and they are from that moment past all sensation whatsoever, is certainly a matter beyond all possible conception.

BUT in order to shew still, that the *doctrine* of the reality and eternity of hell torments has not a sufficient foundation, in the expressions before alledged for proof of it, it is farther contended,

2: *Secondly*, THAT the words, which are interpreted to the sense of a *never-ending* duration of hell torments do not *necessarily* import so much; but as circumcision is called an *everlasting covenant* *, and the *Aaronical Priesthood* is called *everlasting*, both of them in the sense of their being, though of a *long* † yet a *finite* duration: And as *Sodom and Gomorrah*, and *the cities about them*, are said to *suffer the vengeance of ETERNAL fire* ‡, although the *final* and absolute overthrow of the cities and inhabitants is all that is meant: so, where the punishment of sinners in the future state is called *eternal* and *everlasting*, that no more should be understood thereby than that the punishment will be *final* and *irreparable*.

Now 'tis allowed, that there are diverse instances of the use of the word [*αἰώνιος*] or *eter-*

|| Rev. xx. 10. * Gen. xvii. 13. † Exod. xl. 15.
‡ Jude ver. 7.

nal, in the senses here mentioned; but a cause must soon sink, when its advocates are forced to lay hold of such insufficient props to support it. For was it ever pretended that *this* word, or almost any other, is always used in its *full*, extended, and absolute meaning? But is there for that reason, no rule, no *criterion* whereby we may know when it signifies a *real* eternity, and when it is used in a *less proper* manner?

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THE subjects to which the word *eternal* is applied in the instances mentioned, and several others, do of themselves *restrain* the meaning thereof, being parts of the present world, as cities and the *inhabitants* of them are; or pertained thereunto, as the priesthood of *Aaron* and his sons did, and so of course could continue but to a *limited* period: But how does it follow from thence that the *proper* meaning of it must be restrained, when it is applied to *subjects*, which will not only allow it to be used in its common and *natural* meaning, but from other circumstances, manifestly requires that it should be so used?

THE same word is used in *Scripture* to express the duration of GOD, of human souls and of the future state of happiness and glory, and is allowed by all to signify in these cases, as well as many others, a true and *REAL* eternity: Who will then presume to confine its meaning to a *shorter* period, in any case, where the reason and *nature* of things does not absolutely require it?

IN





IN *one* place, which is my *text*, the word is used both to set forth the continuance of the good man's *reward*, and of the sinner's *punishment*. *These shall go away*, εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον, *into everlasting*, [OR ETERNAL] *punishment*; *but the righteous into life* ETERNAL, εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

Now by what *rule* of reason or *criticism* shall the *same word*, in the *same* verse or sentence, designed also for the information of all men, in a matter of the highest nature, and the greatest possible importance, be interpreted in two such different senses, as to signify in the former part of the sentence, a *figurative* eternity, and in the latter a *real* one?

If this may be supposed, I do not see what certainty there can be in *language*, nor to what use of instruction it can serve. For if words cannot be fixed and settled in their meaning, nothing can be gathered from or built upon them, nor will there be any way left to prevent mistake or misconstruction. I believe it will be allowed in the case before us, that we know no words that can express the *real* eternity of hell torments more strongly than those do which have been already cited; so that indeed it will be difficult to imagine, that any thing but a passionate *desire* that the *doctrine* may not be true, could have prevailed upon men, to question what is so plainly and so frequently declared. But the adversaries to this *doctrine* go on still in their opposition. And they urge,

2. SECONDLY,

2. SECONDLY, That, admitting the sense of *Scripture* to be as has been represented, yet that it is not necessary, that the *punishments* threatened should be ever executed. For that, altho' when GOD has engaged himself by *promise* to do any thing for the benefit and happiness of his creatures, it would be inconsistent both with his *justice* and *veracity* to fail in any point of his *promise*, yet that the case differs with regard to his *threats*, because the execution of *them* is left in himself, and his faithfulness and justice are neither of them violated, though he should, in compassion to his unhappy creatures, intirely remit the punishment he has threatened.

BUT surely this *objection* rests upon a very precarious supposition. For what ground in reason can there be to imagine, that GOD should in any case have the *will* to pardon a sinner without repentance? We know he has not proposed to pardon sin at all, but upon the condition of a *vicarious* punishment, what expectation then can men have, who believe the *Gospel*, that the *honour* and justice of GOD, will ever suffer those to go away unpunished, to whom he has so solemnly declared himself irreconcilable? For it is not to the purpose to say, that GOD may punish sinners for a *season*, and as he in his *wisdom* shall see fit, and so not *wholly* forbear the execution of his threats, although he should in a *great measure* remit them: Because if this reason for not executing



cutting his threats to the uttermost be of any force, it concludes as well for his inflicting *no* punishments against sin at all.

AND it is very weakly urged that this forbearance of punishment is frequently practised by wise and good Governors towards their rebellious subjects, without impeachment either of their *wisdom*, or *justice*, or *veracity*. Because if there was any force in this argument, the reasons and measures of the *divine* government must be the same with the *human*, which it would be impious to say. For 'tis well known that *fear* and *jealousy* as well as mercy are often the reasons of such a conduct in *temporal* Governors: But as these reasons can have no place in the *divine* government, so can we be at no kind of certainty about the true and real grounds of GOD's proceedings in *any cases*, and consequently may be guilty of very great presumption, when we dare affirm it to be consistent with the *wisdom* and *veracity* of GOD, to remit any part of the punishments he has so peremptorily threatned.

NEITHER does it mend the matter to instance, as is usually done, in the proceeding of GOD with regard to the desolation he threatned to *Nineveh* and the inhabitants thereof by his Prophet *Jonah*. Because that threatning was plainly *conditional*, and was so taken by the *King* of *Nineveh* himself, being esteemed by him, as a message sent from GOD for his and his people's benefit, and that they might prevent

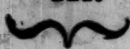
might prevent the evils that were coming upon them, by *turning from their evil ways*; and this appears from the close of his order for a publick humiliation and repentance upon that occasion. *Who can tell, says he, if GOD will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not \*?*

3. THIRDLY, IT is objected, That however plain the terms may be, wherein the *Scriptures* declare the future punishments to be as has been represented, yet they ought not to be taken in a *strict* sense, because the execution of such punishment, would be inconsistent with the known *attributes* of GOD.

Now, in answer to this, it is easy to observe. In general, that there is something here supposed which itself overthrows the *objection*. For it is directly supposed that the declarations of GOD in *Scripture* are full and plain concerning the *eternity* of the *punishments*; and surely this should stop the mouth of all objectors to the *justice* and *wisdom* of inflicting them. For can it be possible that GOD should threaten that which it would be unjust in him to execute? Is not the reasoning conclusive just the contrary way? GOD has threatened, and therefore it must be *righteous* in him to inflict *eternal* punishments; For otherwise *one* attribute of GOD will be set in opposition to *another*, his *veracity* and *justice* will not consist together, which to suppose is to the last degree injurious to GOD's honour. But to proceed,

\* *Jonah* iii. 9.





IT is particularly urged and *objected*, that the threatening and executing *eternal* punishment upon men for crimes committed in this *short* life is *unjust*, because there is no proportion between the duration of one and the other. Now here I desire it may be noted, that the reason for the *sanction* of laws, by threatening of punishments to the breakers of them, is intirely for the security of the laws, and that *they* may have the power intended, which is to keep the subjects within the bounds of their duty. The *penalty* therefore being designed as a guard and defence of the honour and authority of the *government*, the *rule* to be observed in proportioning them is *chiefly* to be taken from those reasons, which most conduce to the effectual preventing the violation of the *laws*.

BUT of all things the measure of punishment can never be fetched from the *time* that is spent in the commission of the crimes punished; for then the degree of guilt must answer to the *time* of contracting it, which is notoriously absurd. For at this rate of arguing, even *murder*, in the most base and *flagitious* instances of it, though one of the most hateful transgressions of the law both of GOD and man, being committed in *shorter time* than many others, must, for that reason, have the *less* guilt, and deserve milder punishment. So that after all, the fitting proper penalties, to the degrees and measures of guilt, is a matter in which the *wisdom* of a Lawgiver is concerned more than his

his *justice*; and whatever is thought and appears to be really *necessary* for supporting the *authority* of a law, and to prevent the breaking of it, must for that reason be deemed *just*, whether it has the appearance of rigour or no; because the end that a Lawgiver has in view, is the preserving the *honour* of his government, by securing an obedience to the laws of it, from which the peace and quiet of the subject does arise. And in the case now under consideration it is very evident, that no more is threatned than what was absolutely necessary for this end; for it is found by daily experience, that all this *supposed* severity in the threatnings of GOD is very far from effectually prevailing upon all men to do their duty.

It is farther to be considered, that one design that GOD proposes in annexing such terrible threatnings to his laws is the *happiness* and benefit of his creatures; for he therefore threatens, that men may thereby be deterred from sin, and by that means be secure from *punishment*, which is one instance of the mercy and loving kindness of GOD; and consequently the *extremity* of the punishment threatned is rather an argument of his *goodness* than of his *severity*, in thus contriving the most likely means to keep men in obedience, and thereby secure their everlasting *salvation*.

So THAT upon the whole we see, that as GOD has threatned *torments* that never will have an end, as the certain portion of im-



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penitent sinners, so there is no ground for interpreting these threatnings in a *softer* sense than what the words *naturally* signify; as if the severity of them was inconsistent with the justice and goodness of GOD. Wherefore it will be our wisdom seriously to believe what GOD has so peremptorily threatned; and instead of rudely questioning the *justice* of it, to betake ourselves heartily and in good earnest to such a course of life, as will secure us from suffering it; and humbly to thank GOD for the *mercy* that he shews even in these *threatnings*, whereby all possible care has been taken to prevent our ruin; and always to bear in our minds this *undoubted truth*, That no punishment can be too severe, that is inflicted upon such presumptuous sinners, who knowing the *judgment of GOD*; that they who do wickedly shall be thus *mightily tormented*, will yet venture upon sin, in defiance of that *fiery indignation* threatned against the ungodly. Men in this case do so wilfully pull down GOD's wrath upon themselves, do so foolishly *reward evil* to themselves, in spite of so many loud warnings, so many earnest exhortations to the contrary, that it is not to be conceived how any *vengeance* can be too severe, any *punishment* too harsh for the correction of so much insolence and so much presumption.

Now to GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY GHOST, *three Persons and one* ever blessed GOD, be ascribed, &c.

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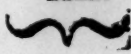
# S E R M O N X I I.

The future Rewards of the  
Righteous considered.

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M A T T H. xxv. 46.

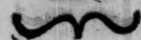
*And these shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life eternal.*

I HAVE already discoursed to you upon the former clause of this *verse*, concerning the nature and duration of the *Punishment*, therein threatned to the *ungodly*; and my design now is to treat upon the latter clause, and to consider the nature and importance of the *reward* promised therein to the *righteous* under the name of *life eternal*. S E R M O N  
X I I.  


WHEN I was handling the *former* subject, my great business was to clear the *doctrine* from the *objections* with which men have, some upon one view, and some upon another, endeavoured to embarrass it. I shall now be free from



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from any such trouble, because, I think, notwithstanding the many absurd fancies, that have been and are entertained by different *sects* of *Christians*, concerning diverse points of great importance in *religion*, this *doctrine* of the *reality* and *eternity* of the future rewards, has never been made a question among any, who have professed their belief of the *holy Scriptures*.

THAT the *righteous* therefore, or they who shall die in the true *faith* and *fear* of GOD, will find the infinite benefit of a *religious* life, in a future state of never ending bliss and happiness, is a matter I may well suppose will be allowed by all in a *Christian* audience. So that the task incumbent upon me is to lay before you the nature and *excellency* of the *glory* hereafter to be *revealed*, so far as the word of GOD has enabled us to do it; that we may all be so affected with the consideration of it, as to free ourselves from a fond and slavish attachment to the pretended pleasures of this life, and seriously and passionately aspire after that blessed state which GOD has prepared for those who love him.

NOR that any description thereof is to be made by the most able among mortal Men, in any degree suitable to the greatness of it: We having been assured by *one Apostle*, that *We know not what we shall be*, and by *another*, that *neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things that are laid up for those that love GOD.*

BUT

BUT although we now see these things as *through a glass darkly*, and know neither what they are, nor wherein they particularly consist, yet GOD has however been pleased to give us such an account of them in *general*, as may serve, when duly attended to, to inflame our desires after them, and spur us on to a diligent discharge of the terms upon which they are to be obtained. For which reason it will not, I hope, be an unprofitable undertaking to represent to you what the *Scriptures* have declared upon this subject. And

I. FIRST, They who shall attain to the comfort and happiness of a blessed resurrection shall be entirely free from all those *evils* of every kind, with which the most prosperous are sometimes, more or less, visited in this world. *They shall rest from their labours*, says the *spirit* of GOD, in the *Revelations*. Which rest is more particularly described \*, where it is said, that *GOD shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away*. And what a degree of comfort and happiness is this, to be thus freed from all those *evils* which so embitter life, and render even the *innocent* pleasures of it insipid and tiresome!

\* Rev. xxi. 4.





## The future Rewards of

TROUBLES and afflictions are the never failing attendants upon men in this mortal state; and though there is a great difference in the kinds, and in the degrees of them, with which different men are visited, yet even they, who know least of them, are subject to so *many*, as will effectually disappoint them in all the hopes they may have entertained of being *really* happy, in the enjoyment of any sensual delights whatsoever. If they feel no pain themselves, if they know no want, if they are indeed possessors of every comfort which this world affords, which is an *absurd supposition*, being a thing which indeed never happened nor can happen, yet such is the necessary condition of life, that the *misfortunes of others* will disturb their quiet and interrupt their enjoyments.

FOR, as we must in duty, as well as by *natural necessity*, share in the happiness of those who stand in any near degree of *relation* to us, so the misfortunes of all men are more or less, a cause of uneasiness to every *considerate* man, to whom they are known, and who has any compassion or tenderness in him. To see every day, sad and melancholic objects of pity, and to hear their lamentations without power of affording them any relief, must be the cause of uncomfortable reflections, to men of the *same nature* with those who are suffering under so much misery and distress, whilst they consider themselves continually liable to the *same* degree of unhappiness.

FOR

FOR let men's *affluence* be never so great, and their enjoyments never so much to their taste, yet the *uncertain tenure* of these things, and the *change* that is often suddenly made in them, whereby a state of life deemed most happy, is altered at once into a *scene* of deep distress and sorrow, must cause men, who ever think, to be *sensibly* touched with the *misfortunes* of their brethren, so far at least as to conceive *strong fears* for themselves, and this will be sufficient to check their gaiety, and throw a cloud over their spirits, even in the midst of their jollity.

'Tis true, indeed, there are some who are so steeled against all tender sentiments, as to be affected but little with the afflictions of others, and to be so vain in their imaginations as to believe *no evil will happen to them*; but then, even these men are continually subject to a slavish fear of death, they know *that* must put an end to their enjoyments, and this makes their hearts sink within them; distrust and melancholy fill their minds and destroy the relish of every enjoyment.

THIS is the uncomfortable state of the most *prosperous* in respect of the satisfactions of life, even if they could be enjoy'd in the most complete manner. But alas! how many *ingredients* are there for making a man in any *just sense* happy, besides these already mentioned! He must be free from *sin* before he can be free from *sorrow*, and as long as he continues  
to



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to offend GOD by frequent lapses into sin contrary to his resolutions, and inconsistent with his known duty, how prosperous and easy soever he may be in other regards, he must be to a great degree *unhappy*.

FOR although he may be a serious *Christian*, yet he is continually in a state of *warfare*; he is ever in fear of, and in danger from the devices and snares of his great adversary the *devil*; is often in *doubt* of his own sincerity; is *jealous* of his own constancy; is therefore forced to be always vigilant, and upon his guard, lest he should *fall from* his steadfastness, and *at last* become a *cast away*.

How blessed then must that *condition of life* be, in which nothing will occur that is distasteful, or the cause of any kind of uneasiness or disturbance! When we shall be free from all *anxiety* and solicitude concerning our *spiritual* state; shall have no doubt concerning the pardon of our sins, and the favour and loving-kindness of GOD.

WHEN all factions, disputes and discontents will be at an end; when there will be no difference in sentiments, no diversity of manners, no contrariety of interests, no ground of jealousy or resentment; when we shall neither be afflicted in our *own persons*, nor in the *persons* of those whom we love as tenderly as we do ourselves; shall neither suffer the piercing affliction of seeing our children, wives, or friends torn from us by a sudden and immature death,

nor

nor be under fears concerning any kind of distress apprehended to be falling either upon *ourselves* or *them*; when we shall neither be oppressed by the open violence of *declared enemies*, nor betrayed by the treachery of *false friends*; when we shall neither be provoked by *other men's* slanders, nor ruffled by our *own passions*; but shall be at peace in our own minds, and with all about us: A *life* so free from all the usual calamities of this mortal state, and blessed also (which is the crown of all) with an everlasting continuance, without intermission, and without end; in conjunction with a free use of our faculties, and an enjoyment of all rational satisfactions; even without any enlargement of the *powers* of the body, or the *faculties* of the soul, would be doubtless a most ample *recompence* for any conflicts, pains or troubles undergone to obtain *it*, even if this was the *whole* of the happiness promised as a *reward* to the *righteous*. But,

2. SECONDLY, The *happiness* of the *future state* does not barely consist in an exemption from all pain, and sorrow, and misery, nor in being securely fenced against all those *evils*, which either destroy or lessen the comforts of this life, but it implies moreover, our being admitted to a state of life, in itself *great* and *glorious*; the pleasures whereof are beyond comparison, and far above imagination, *excellent*, being all spiritual and intellectual. And when they are represented to us in *Scripture* under the



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the figures of a *feast* and a *kingdom*, and a *marriage*, this is done only in condescension to our low and imperfect capacities, to set before us in the way of *analogy*, the excellency of the future glories, by such things as are in greatest esteem among men here.

BUT there is no *real* resemblance between the one and the other, and 'tis beyond the skill of *men* or of *angels* to describe it in such a manner as to make us rightly conceive and comprehend it, before we ourselves partake thereof. However, as far as the *Scripture* gives us light in the matter, we may safely and positively declare, in what it does consist. And that we are told is,

1. FIRST, In a wonderful alteration of the properties of our bodies.

2. SECONDLY, In the being admitted to the sight of GOD, and to the society of the *blessed* inhabitants of *heaven*.

1. FIRST, The happiness of the future state will consist in a wonderful alteration in the properties of our bodies. They will be endued with diverse new and glorious qualities, all contrary to the several imperfections which they are now encompassed withal. The account which the *Scripture* gives of this alteration, and improvement of our bodies, is this, *But our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour the LORD Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the work-*

ing

ing of that mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself\*. And what an astonishing change and improvement is this, that our *frail bodies*, subject now to a thousand miseries, and to death, should be fashioned like unto the *glorious body of our LORD*, now that he is exalted in his human nature to the *right hand of GOD*, above all principalities and powers, receiving the reward of his holy life and meritorious sufferings! The wonderfulness of this change is set forth in the text I just now mentioned in the strongest terms possible, for it is said, that it will be the effect of no less than an *Almighty Power*, the *working of that Almighty Power*, by which he is *ABLE to subdue ALL THINGS to himself*. The *Apostle* is still more particular in the describing *this change* in his first epistle to the *Corinthians*; for speaking there of the resurrection of the *same body*, he says, it is *sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption*; it is *sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory*; it is *sown in weakness, it is raised in power*; it is *sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body* †. The plain meaning of which expressions is this; whereas our *bodies* are now, in this *mortal state*, of a *frail nature*, and *corruptible composition*, subject to daily changes, and not capable of being supported above a certain term of years, and are all that while, in a continual tendency towards a dissolution, and upon the se-

\* Phil. iii. 20. † 1 Cor. xv. 42, &c.



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paration of their souls from them, are of necessity to be buried, or otherwise disposed of, that it may no longer continue the object of the senses of those who survive; and whereas they are, all along, whilst living, weak and obnoxious to distempers, and ill accidents; to hunger and to thirst; and are not to be subsisted but by *continual reparations*, by meat, and drink, and physick; they shall in the day of salvation be so *refined*, as no longer to be subject to any disorder or decay; shall be beautiful also and *glorious*, and so powerful and vigorous as to continue in the same condition of *sprightliness* and *activity* for ever; so *spiritual* as to be no longer a check or hindrance to the *motions* of their souls, but become fit partners for them, in the enjoyment of all those *spiritual* delights which will arise from the *sight* of GOD, and the society of the *holy angels*, and *just men made perfect*, which is the other thing wherein the Scriptures have declared that the future happiness does consist; namely,

2. SECONDLY, In being admitted to the *sight* of GOD, and to the society of *angels* and *just men made perfect*.

1. *First*, To the vision, or *sight* of GOD; the *Apostle St. John*, though he says \*, that it does not yet appear what we shall be, yet he also tells us, that when the *author* of our *salvation* appears we shall see him as he is. And of this we are also assured from other places of

\* 1 John iii. 2.

Scripture.

*Scripture. Thus, blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see GOD\*. Without holiness no man shall see the LORD†.* Now it can be hardly needful to tell you that this expression of *seeing GOD* must be understood in a *spiritual* sense: For it would be extremely absurd to expect that the *invisible* and *spiritual* Creator of all things could be the object of our *bodily senses*, but by the *seeing of GOD*, we must understand such a sight of him as the nature of a *pure spirit* will admit of; and consequently, that he must be understood to be seen with our *spiritual* faculties only.

Now this *knowledge* of GOD which arises from a clear and fuller communication of his nature and perfections, to the more enlarged and more perfect understandings of men, when they come to *heaven*, together with those sentiments that will thereby be raised in them, is what Divines call the *beatifick vision*, or the blessed *sight of GOD*; by which must be meant, such a complete *knowledge* and enjoyment of GOD, as is consistent with the nature of creatures, who being finite, cannot in their utmost perfection be supposed to attain to such exalted faculties, as to be able to comprehend the *infinite* nature of GOD, and his *boundless* perfections.

BUT whereas we here know GOD, only so far as he has been pleased to reveal himself in the holy *Scriptures*, and by those *signatures*

\* Matt. v. 8.    † Heb. xii. 14.



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and marks which he has given of himself in the works of the *creation*, [according to that of the *Apostle*\*, where he tells us, that GOD's *eternal power and godhead are clearly seen by the things that are made* ;] which is a sight of him as *through a glass*, and is a seeing him by *faith* only ; when we have a view of that manifestation that he makes of himself in *heaven*, we shall see him *face to face* ; we shall *with open eyes behold the glory of GOD*, as St. Paul says †. *We shall see him as he is*, as St. John ‡.

ALL our false notions will be removed, and we shall no longer be in perplexity, about the *justice or goodness* of his *Providence*, nor how to adjust and reconcile *one* attribute with *another* ; but shall see fully an entire *connexion* and agreement among all the perfections of the *Godhead*, and all this with an absolute certainty void of all scruple and doubtfulness.

Now such a view of GOD as this, is not to be attained to without a vast enlargement of the *human faculties*. So glorious a sight would quite overbear the strength of *them*, and even oppress them with joy and admiration. Therefore it is, that in that blessed state of happiness and glory, the capacity of our minds will be improved and heightened ; so as not only to bear the astonishing *presence* of the *LORD* of *all things*, but to be pleased, and delight-

\* Rom. i. 20. † 2 Cor. iii. 18. ‡ 1 John iii. 2.

ed with it also beyond degree, and above description. For *in his presence there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore.* And how can it but be infinitely delightful thus to have our minds made capable of directly and clearly contemplating that Being, in whom every thing that is good and excellent does centre, and from whom every perfection flows.

WHAT can be imagined so transporting, as thus to be admitted to the *immediate* knowledge of all the great and surprizing designs of his *Providence*, in the world, which are now so intricate and so much above the skill of the wisest and most accurate reasoner upon earth to find out? What perfection of happiness must it be, to be continually attending upon him, whose *favour* is life itself, and the *light* of whose *countenance* is the very perfection of *glory*. Especially too, when we shall not *see* him only, but be *like him* also, as the *Scripture* assures us \*. For what greater happiness can there be in nature, than to be like the very *happiest* as well as the very *best* of Beings?

AND as we shall thus see GOD and enjoy his presence, so we shall likewise see others in possession of the same happiness which we ourselves enjoy, and have the pleasure of a perpetual conversation with them, even the *angels of GOD, and the spirits of just men made per-*

\* 1 John iii. 2.



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*fect*; and consequently set free from all the weakneses of human life, and all that *peevishness* and unevenness of temper that the best of men are sometimes subject to, by which their conversation is rendered less entertaining, if not uneasy and distasteful to others.

WE shall then be received as companions to all the greatest and best of men, of whom we have justly the highest esteem from the great reputation they have gained in the world for their virtues and excellencies. We shall probably have the pleasure and comfort of meeting with our *dearest relations* and *friends*, whom we loved as tenderly as our own souls; and for whose sakes, whilst living, we would have contentedly undergone any difficulties, and whose memories, when dead, we honoured and revered.

WE shall then enjoy that very *society* which all wise men so much value here upon earth; without any of those allays that will always, in some degree or other, mix with the sweets and pleasures of every *earthly* friendship. For the best men, whilst they are encompassed with the infirmities of flesh, are subject to so many *faults* and *passions*, as are a great abatement to the satisfaction that might otherwise be taken in their company: But conversation in *heaven* is free from those imperfections, and is *sweetened* with every degree of satisfaction that the most *exalted friendship* can yield; and is moreover free from all that distrust, and those private

regards that do so much retrench from the pleasure and perfection of all the *friendships* of this world.

GREAT certainly must that *happiness* be, that results from a constant enjoyment of the kindness and good-will of such numbers, all bound to each other by the strictest bands of *universal love* and charity. With what exultation will they join in incessant return of thanks and praise to *him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb that was slain, to GOD even our Father, and to our LORD JESUS CHRIST, who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood*; evermore praising GOD with joy for his wisdom and power, in the *Creation*, for the goodness of his *Providence*, and for that stupendous mercy, pity and condescension, which he was pleased to shew in the *Redemption* of lost mankind by the death of his *only Son*; whereby the forgiveness of sins was granted, and those succours of the *holy Spirit of GOD* were obtained, by means of which they have happily surmounted all the difficulties of the *world*, the temptations of the *flesh* and the *devil*, and are now securely placed in the possession of that *exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, which was the reward promised to their *faith* and *obedience*.

THUS will the *saints made perfect* be in part employed, and by an employment so truly excellent they will find substantial *happiness*. For what can there be devised more suitable or more



entertaining to the mind of man, than a daily increase of *knowledge*, an universal display of never-failing *charity*, and a constant *grateful* sense of favours expressed by an endless return of *thanksgivings* for the same.

AND thus far we may safely proceed in the description of the future happiness; because so far we have the *holy Scriptures* to direct us. Indeed they have not in this, any more than in other matters, condescended to satisfy the curiosity of men, by setting forth the particular employment of the inhabitants of the heavenly *Jerusalem*; they have however said enough to raise our hopes and to kindle our desires, and to make all carelessness and negligence in the use of the means for attaining so *excellent a glory*, altogether inexcusable.

For besides what has been hitherto observed, there is *one circumstance* more in the future happiness, which the *Scriptures* make frequent mention of; a circumstance which all the happiness of this world is destitute of, which yet is absolutely necessary for the making any state and condition of being truly happy, and that is the assurance of its *everlasting* continuance. The future happiness is not only great in the *degrees* of it, but it is *eternal* also: And this indeed is necessary in order to our being saved completely and perfectly. For what an abatement must it be to any man's *happiness*, let it at present be never so great, if he be able to see to the end of it? How would the forethought

thought of its being some time or other to determine, and that he must return to his old condition of weakness and want, fill his mind with such fear and solicitude, as would dash the *sweets* and lessen the joys even of *heaven* itself.

BUT when the weight of that *glory* is not only an *exceeding* one, but *eternal* also; when it is not only transporting in itself, but is moreover blest with that comfortable condition of suffering *no change* and having *no end*, this is what renders it truly and *absolutely complete*, and every way equal to the desires and hopes of a rational creature. For the *Scriptures* have farther assured us, that *in his presence there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand pleasures for EVER-MORE* \*. That *they who are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: And they who turn many to righteousness as the stars FOR EVER AND EVER* †. That *the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father* ‡. That *they shall die no more, but shall be equal to the angels: That their hearts shall rejoice and their joy no man shall take from them, but that they shall be FOREVER with the LORD, and shall obtain salvation which is in Jesus Christ with ETERNAL glory; and that this glory is far above all comprehension; and that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived, what GOD has prepared for those that love him.* Now how lofty, how magnificent

\* Psal. xvi. 21.

† Dan. xii. 2, 3.

‡ Mat. xiii. 43.



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are these expressions! Infinite without doubt must that *happiness* be, which the *Spirit of GOD* has taken care by such a *variety* of phrase, and with so much *pomp* of words to describe. And though we are not let into the particular knowledge of the kind or manner of the *bliss* and *glory*, yet we are infinitely secure that not one *jot* or *tittle* of *GOD*'s word shall fall to the ground; so that we have reason to be stirred up to the searching out what we are to do to be *saved*, from the hopes of the future glory (though 'tis thus in general only set forth to us) as if it had been described in the minutest manner. For we may safely trust an *Allwise*, and *Good*, and *Powerful* *GOD*, for the particular method of making us happy. He that is the fountain of all good, and from whom every thing that is perfect flows, both can, and certainly will contrive such means for our *happiness*, as will best suit our natures and capacities.

IN a word, whatever imperfect notions we have (and must have whilst we are in this world) of the kind and manner of those *communications* which *GOD* will make of himself in the *kingdom of glory*; of this we may be infallibly certain, that man's happiness hereafter will be such, as it will be fitting for the great *LORD* of all things to provide for those whom he shall be pleased to own to be his *good* and *faithful* servants, and accordingly will fully answer

fewer all that the *holy Scriptures* have any where in the most lofty strains said about it.

I SHALL add an observation upon what has been said, and then conclude with a short *inference* or two.

THERE seems to me to have long been a mighty *curiosity* among *Divines*, and others, to find out something, if they could, of the nature of the *happiness* of *heaven* beyond what the *Scriptures* have explained. The *school-men* in particular have indulged themselves in a liberty of *dogmatizing* upon this subject, when more modesty, and a greater willingness to have professed their *ignorance*, in points above the reach of human wit to comprehend in this life, would have been more becoming, and would have prevented also the loss of a great deal of time spent in many a *fruitless speculation*.

AND surely it is also a *culpable* thing thus to pretend to be wise above that which is written; because it carries with it an implicit charge upon the *holy Scriptures* as not having sufficiently declared the purposes of GOD, with regard to the *rewards* of the *righteous*. But it fares in this, as in every other aspersion upon the *lively oracles*, it serves only farther to illustrate the *wisdom* of GOD in the *revelation* he has been pleased to make.

IN the case before us 'tis plain, that it is so far from being needful, that we should have had a more minute description of the nature, kind, and degree of the *future joys*, than what



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is actually given, for the purpose of inviting men to *seek the kingdom of GOD, and his righteousness*, that it is past the power of the warmest imagination to conceive, how any thing can be added for that purpose.

WE are assured of an *exemption* from all the evils to which *this life* is obnoxious, and of a *happiness* that is to arise from an improvement of the powers and properties of the body, and from the presence of GOD and *Christ*, and the society of *angels* and *just men made perfect*; which is the sum of the Scripture doctrine upon this point. Now if we should suppose any particular description to have been added of the *precise way* and manner, whereby GOD will *communicate* himself for the happiness of the righteous in heaven, what would it be else, but to suppose something to be declared for our *encouragement*, of which we could form no *idea* or *conception*.

FOR as every thing that is said in *Scripture* concerning the *future joys* is represented as attainable through the *change* that is to happen in our bodies, and the enlargement that will thereby arise of the powers and perfections of the human nature, of which we can have *now* no conception; it is just as absurd to expect to have been made *wiser* by any declaration of the manner and kind of the gratifications of saints *made perfect* in their *spiritual* and *glorified* bodies, as it would be to endeavour to make a man, who has been *deaf* or *blind*

*blind* from his birth, truly sensible of *sounds* or *colours*. SERMON  
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AND this is a plain reason why we meet with nothing of this kind related in *Scripture*. Indeed many of the particulars before mentioned, and which I urged in order to *exemplify* the *greatness* of the future happiness, must be considered as *inferences* from the *general* declarations of *Scripture*, rather than as the direct *assertions* thereof; such as the pleasures of *friendship* with *saints* and *angels*; the power of knowing the secrets of nature and philosophy; of solving the *intricacies* of *providence*; of fully discerning the *reason* of GOD's *dispensations*, and the *harmony* of his *attributes*; and of making a continual progressive *improvement* in *knowledge* and understanding.

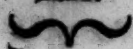
I SAY the *holy Scriptures* have made no mention of these, or any other particular acts of our faculties, as instances wherein the future happiness is to consist. Every thing said concerning it tends to the raising in us the strongest expectations of something *stupendously* great and ravishing, but the *particulars* thereof are none of them recounted, save only what are rather the necessary conditions of all happiness, than happiness itself; such as *innocence*, or a freedom from sin; *indolence*, or an exemption from pain and sorrow; and *immortality*, or the secure enjoyment of all without end.

AND the reason of this may be, that as the *Scriptures* were written for the instruction of

all



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all men, and the *rewards* proposed for the encouragement of obedience, are *alike* directed to the ignorant and unlearned as well as to the more knowing; it was suitable to the *Divine Wisdom* that *they* should be represented in such a manner, as might prove an *equal* encouragement to the wise and the unwise.

Now it must be owned that men of low parts, and vulgar attainments, though full as capable as others, of knowing the *main branches* of their *duty*, and of performing an acceptable obedience, thro' *GOD's grace*, are neither endowed with patience enough to attend to any considerations of the kind before mentioned, nor with a sufficient elevation of mind, to be at all moved or allured by them.

BUT whatever is said in *general* concerning this happiness in the terms of *seeing GOD*, and *Christ*, and being *like him*, of partaking of a *fulness of joy*, and of *pleasure for evermore*; of *shining*, as the *brightness of the firmament*, as the *sun*, as the *stars*; of *eating and drinking at Christ's table*; of *rejoicing with a joy that no man shall take from them*; of obtaining *salvation with eternal glory*; of being *made white in the blood of the Lamb*; and of being *therefore before the throne of GOD*, and *serving him day and night*; of *hungering and thirsting no more*; of *having all tears wip'd away from their eyes*; of being no more subject to *death*, to *sorrow*, or to *pain*;

I SAY

I SAY whatever is delivered concerning the future state of *glory*, in these or any other expressions of *Scripture*, (for they are all alike *general* and to the same purport) it is evident there is no difference between one man and another, of sound understanding, in their notions and sentiments concerning *these things*. They are *alike* sensible of the desirableness of a *fulness* of joy, and of *pleasure* for evermore, with all other men. They are as conscious of the blessing of being freed from a subjection to sin, and the horrors of it, from a slavish and abject fear of death, and from pain and sorrow as men of a more *exalted* genius, and consequently are as likely to receive the full benefit intended by the proposal of the future rewards, as if they were never so well qualified to raise *speculations* concerning them.

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I SHALL now exercise your patience no longer than whilst I lay before you the following short *inferences*.

I. FIRST, The *greatness* of the *glory* one day to be revealed should stir us up to great diligence in performing every thing, which upon due examination appears necessary to enable us to enjoy it. Men are found to be very careful, and to spare no pains for the attaining any thing they have set their hearts upon in this life. Whether it be wealth or honour that men are desirous of, how industrious will they be, in casting about for the best method of accomplishing what they aim at?

Now



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Now did we rightly consider the greatness of that *salvation* that is to be enjoy'd hereafter, and raise our esteem of it, in proportion to its real value, how much *more* active ought we to be in our endeavours to secure the enjoyment of what it is so much *more* for our advantage not to be disappointed of?

LET this consideration therefore move us to act like creatures endued with reason; and let us not slight the opportunities GOD has been pleased to put into our hands of obtaining *an inheritance that fadeth not away eternal in the heavens.*

LET us consider that the season for our making provision for our future *well-being* will not last always; and that, for any thing we know, it may slip from us very suddenly and unexpectedly; of this however, we are most certain that we are all hastening to the end of our *sojourning* here: We are some of us in the *extremity* of life, others *well advanced* in years, all of us of *frail bodies*, and continually liable to a dissolution; and yet this life is the *only* season wherein we can secure the happiness we are speaking of.

Now how ought such thoughts as these to awaken every sinner from his *spiritual lethargy*, and put all the powers of his soul into motion? How can he seriously believe, and attentively consider these things, and not be warmed into a due concern for his interest in a case, where no less is at stake than an everlasting life of glory.

2. SECONDLY, The *nature* and *kind* of the happiness we have been discoursing of should engage us to set light by the pleasures of this world and all that is here called *honourable* and *glorious*. Whatsoever is innocent may, for that reason alone, be used, and the pleasures and honours of this life are not to be shunned as such, but only so far as they are inconsistent with the *rules of reason*, and contradict the precepts of *religion*. And when they do so they must be wholly avoided, and if we have in our view the excellency of that *glory*, which shall be revealed, they will not only be avoided, but *despised* also.

FOR what is there in any of these things desirable, when they are brought into competition with the *glories of heaven*? Admit them to be satisfactory in what degree you please, and suppose the want of any of them to be as irksome as you think fit, yet when the other world is taken into the account, and the joys of heaven, and the infinite duration thereof are balanced against them, what room is there to demur concerning the choice that is to be made? To *love the world* and *the things of the world*, when they stand in the way of *such an EXCEEDING and ETERNAL weight of glory*, is folly beyond parallel, and which nothing but the common experience and observation of the truth of it could make conceiveable.

3. THIRDLY, The consideration of the *greatness* of the future glory should serve to assuage the weight



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weight and severity of those evils and calamities with which it may please GOD in his providence to afflict us, whether they are extreme want and penury, or the untimely unexpected death of our dearest relations and friends, or any sore visitation by pain or sickness, or any unjust persecution by our enemies; or *base ungrateful* desertion of us by our friends; whether we suffer the evils usually incident to our bodies, or our minds, or our fortunes, yet will the due and serious consideration of the happiness we have been discoursing of weigh them all down and make them even as nothing upon the comparison. Of this the *Apostle St. Paul* assures us\*, when he tells us, that *the sufferings of this mortal life are not worthy to be compared with the glories which shall be revealed in us.*

LET us consider as we ought, that our longest time allotted us in this life is but short, that *this world* is but a *passage* to the other, that we are now but upon a *journey* to the heavenly *Jerusalem*, and then we shall expect the common fate of *travellers*, which is to meet with rubs and difficulties on the way, with rough roads, rude passengers, foul weather, and the want of many conveniencies that we enjoy at home.

WE should also consider farther, that the afflictions of this world will really increase the rewards of the other, and that *our light affliction*

\* Rom. viii. 18.

*which*

*which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* A thorough belief of such an unspeakably great reward, and a persuasion of our having behaved ourselves so as to be intitled to it through the *grace* of the *Gospel*, would have the same effect upon us, that it had upon men in the first ages of *Christianity*, and would make us bear all the troubles of this life with a contented, chearful spirit, and even *glory in tribulation*, and take joyfully the *spoiling of our goods*, knowing that in heaven we shall have a more enduring substance.

4. LASTLY, This consideration should arm all men against the *fear of death*; especially all such fear and dread of it as does many times make men transgress their duty to escape it. For how terrible soever *death* is *naturally* to all men, yet the hope that is to be had in *Christ Jesus* quite takes away the sting of it, and the belief of its being only a *passage* to another life, and an entrance into glory, will so abate the terror of it, that if men's *faith* is not strong enough to remove *all fear* from their hearts, yet they will be under no degree of astonishment or confusion, and it is justly hoped will generally be able with *cheerfulness* to resign their souls to GOD as to their *faithful Creator*.

Now to GOD the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, be ascribed as is most due, all HONOUR and GLORY, &c. now and evermore. *Amen.*



...and a portion of our having betrayed ourselves  
 as to be limited to it through the grace  
 of the Gospel - would have the same effect upon  
 us that it had upon men in the first ages of  
 Christianity, and would make as dear all the  
 principles of this life with a continued char-  
 ity, and even glory in the future, and the  
 joyful the future of our souls, knowing that  
 in heaven we shall have a more glorious habitation.  
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 all men against the fear of death; especially  
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 For how terrible losses does it naturally to all  
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 is a precious reward, the King of it, and the  
 belief of its being only a passage to another life,  
 and an entrance into glory, will so abate the  
 terror of it, that it men's hearts are not strong  
 enough to remove us from their hearts, yet  
 they will be under no degree of affliction  
 or confusion, and it is justly hoped will con-  
 siderably help with Christianity to resign their  
 souls to God as to their Fatherly Creator.  
 Now to GOD the Father, Son, and Holy  
 Ghost, be ascribed all praise, all honour,  
 and glory, etc. now and evermore. Amen.

# SERMON XIII.

The Duty of *Confession*, and the  
Effect of *Sacerdotal Absolu-  
tion*.

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I JOHN i. 9.

*If we confess our Sins, he is faithful  
and just to forgive us our Sins, and  
to cleanse us from all Unrighteous-  
ness.*

THE APOSTLE in the Verse before the SERMON  
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*text*, having declared himself and all  
men to be continually subject to sin  
and transgression, and that if they should *say*  
*they had no sin*, they would *deceive themselves*  
*and the truth would not be in them*, proceeds  
in the words of the *text* to administer com-  
fort under this unhappy condition; assuring us,  
that, although this is our sad case, yet, that  
it is not a desperate one; forasmuch as GOD  
who is *faithful* and *just*, will not fail in the  
performance of any part of his promises, and  
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therefore, *if we CONFESS our sins*, that he will assuredly *forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness*.

CONFESSIO*N* of *Sins* is frequently required of us in *holy Scripture*, and the importance thereof is fully represented by its being *sometimes* declared to be the means of pardon and forgiveness. St. *John* affirms here, that *GOD* will *forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness*, upon our CONFESSIO*N* of them. And *David* declares, that upon his *acknowledgment* of his *sin*, and his *not hiding* his *iniquity*, but CONFESSING his *transgressions unto the LORD*,—*GOD forgave him the iniquity of his sin* \*. But then such a *confession* only must be meant as is preceded by *faith*, attended with *contrition*, and verified to be sincere by a true and real *amendment*; for pardon and salvation are not to be obtained upon other terms.

HOWEVER, where the practice of any particular duty is thus recommended, and encouraged by the promise of what can be the effect of nothing but an *intire obedience*; altho' an *intire obedience* is really meant under the mention of *one act* of it, yet the intention plainly is to admonish us of the *eminence* and importance of that *single act*, and of its indispensable necessity for procuring the blessing promised.

\* Psalm xxxii. 5.

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It is fit therefore that a *duty* of such consequence should be well understood, and the nature and the parts of it should be fixed and agreed upon by *Christians*, lest a mistake therein should affect any of them even with regard to *salvation* itself. But since very different opinions are entertained concerning *this duty*, it must be of use to examine into it, and to state it, according to what shall appear to be the plain *doctrine* of *Scripture*, and the *practice* of the ancient Church.

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IN treating upon this *duty* of CONFESSIO I propose,

I. FIRST, To shew you in what it consists, and what the peculiar use and advantage thereof is.

II. SECONDLY, With what affections it must be attended.

III. THIRDLY, That it must be always made to GOD ; and that it is not *of necessity* to be made to any other, save in a few cases which I shall mention.

IV. FOURTHLY, To shew how the custom in the *primitive Church* of permitting an open and *publick confession* of *secret sins* is consistent with the doctrine here advanced.

V. FIFTHLY, To enquire into the ground of the practice, which afterwards grew by degrees into *general* use, of *confessing secretly* to a *Priest* ; as also into the present doctrine and practice of the *Church of Rome* grounded up-



on the determination of the *Council of Trent* concerning this point.

VI. SIXTHLY, To vindicate the doctrine and practice of the *Church of England* concerning CONFESSION.

VII. SEVENTHLY, Explain what seems to be the full import and extent of the power claimed by the *Church and Clergy*, of ABSOLVING *sinners*.

I. FIRST, To shew you in what the duty of *confession* consists, and what the peculiar use and advantage thereof is.

CONFESSION is properly introductory to that part of *prayer*, which, according to *St. Paul's* distribution of it into its several parts\*, contains the [*δεήσεις*] *supplications*, or those petitions wherein we intreat GOD's mercy for the *pardon* of our *sins*, and the turning from us those evils which we deserve in punishment for them. Indeed the bare asking pardon for transgressions, is a real acknowledgment of our having been guilty of them. However, it is fit there should be a distinct *declaration* of our being sinners before GOD, and of our having *knowingly* offended against his holy laws, by *wilfully* leaving *undone* those things which we *ought to have done*, and by *doing those things which we ought not to have done*: 'Tis fit, I say, in this manner to *confess* our *sins*, when we

\* 1 Tim. ii. 1.

offer up the *Sacrifice of prayer* in the most *publick* manner.

AND this is not only recommended in the *passages of Scripture* before mentioned, but in many others. So the *wise man* observes, that *he that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso CONFESSETH and forsaketh them shall have mery \**, and in *Daniel's* famous prayer for the restoration of *Jerusalem* confession of sins bears so great a part, that he styles the whole, *the making his CONFESSIO* †.

HERE the enemies of religion are wont *scoffingly* to inquire for what purpose it is, that our sins are thus to be recounted to GOD. Shall we presume, say they, to *inform* him? Do ye not allow that he *bath searched us and known us; that he knoweth our down sitting and our up-rising, and understands our thoughts afar off* ‡. To what end then are we to enumerate our transgressions before him, who is so thoroughly acquainted with all we do, and with all we think?

Now in answer hereunto, let it be considered, that what the *holy Scriptures* have made the condition of an acceptable prayer, must not be omitted, even if no cause could be assigned for the use of it. For, what GOD has appointed must be received with *reverence*, and observed with *care*, although we should be strangers to the reason of the appointment.

\* Prov. xxxii. 5. † Dan. ix. 4—12. ‡ Ps. cxxxix. 1; 2, 3.



But this is not the present case: For *confession* is plainly an *essential* part of *prayer*, because it directly conduces to the giving men a sense of their guilt, and the affecting their hearts with *shame* and *sorrow*.

HUMILITY also is an absolute requisite in every acceptable suppliant; but nothing can more effectually subdue all the swellings of *pride*, than the having before us a *black catalogue* of those sins whereby we have debased our nature, contradicted our reason, and acted the parts of fools and madmen. *Confession* cannot, 'tis certain, instruct GOD, but it may, and will, to very good purpose too, teach and instruct us.

WE cannot make GOD better acquainted with the state of our souls by an *enumeration* of our sins, however distinct and particular; but we may thereby bring ourselves to a quicker sense of our dangerous condition, and of the necessity of reformation.—We may be taught *truly* to humble ourselves before GOD, to be more upon our guard against any future assaults of the *devil* and our own lusts, and be so wise and so happy, as *to do no more presumptuously*.

THESE are the manifest advantages of opening our hearts by a *particular Confession*. And this is a reason for the use of it in all our *solitary* addresses to GOD. And although the nature of *publick* prayers does necessarily forbid the use of *particular confessions*, as will

will be presently very fully shewn, yet the *general confession* in every *publick service*, should be so contrived, that occasion may be given to every penitent, to recollect the sins of his own soul, those particularly that are *presumptuous*, and do *easily beset him*, that no means may be omitted, of bringing men to such a true sense of their own case, as may best secure them against future transgressions. I come now,

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II. SECONDLY, To shew you with what *affections* of mind this duty of *confession* must be attended.

NOW every *confession* must be made with a full *conviction* in our minds, of the *evil* and *baseness* of those sins which we confess, and with a sincere *sorrow* and true contrition of heart, for our having at any time been guilty of them, and with firm *purposes* and resolution of never committing them any more.

'TIS NOT a formal acknowledging our errors, a bare recital of our sins before GOD, that will be sufficient; if it is *thus* only that we *confess* our sins unto GOD, his *faithfulness* and *justice* will no ways engage him to *forgive us our sins*; there is no need of such a *confession* as this to GOD; for he (as was before observed) does not need to be informed, what, or how great, or how many our sins are. The design therefore of *confessing* our sins to GOD, being not to instruct him, but to *shame* and *humble* ourselves, and make us more sensible of our own *folly* and



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*baseness*, if our *confession* to GOD is not also attended with *conviction* in our minds, and with shame and sorrow in our hearts, our very *confession*, will add to our condemnation; for without these affections it is no better than hypocrisy, and we are destitute of the power of *religion* and godliness.

HE therefore who *confesses* must be really convinced of the enormity of those sins he does confess, and of his own unworthiness upon the account of them; and if he is *indeed* in this good disposition, he cannot avoid finding an *uneasiness* and trouble in his mind at the mention of those sins which he *confesses*, whilst he considers that they are a disgrace to the dignity of his own nature, and an affront to the Purity and Majesty of that GOD whom he serves; that he has been a *rebel* to the righteous laws of the Sovereign of the world, and guilty of the basest ingratitude to his Maker, his Redeemer, and Sanctifier; that he has moreover done this upon the most trifling and fordid reasons, in spite of GOD's threats, in defiance of his favour, and in view of damnation.

HE that is hearty in his *confession* will be sensible of all this, and he that is so will be affected with *shame*, *sorrow* and *remorse*. I am now speaking of those *confessions* that are made upon the first conversion of sinners from a wicked and dissolute course of living, to the practice of religion; or after any grievous lapses

ses into sin, in breach of their former vows and resolutions. And in such cases, if they are not affected in the manner mentioned, they have reason to suspect the *sincerity* of their *confessions*, how punctual and circumstantial soever they may be.

BUT here ariseth a question; how far this remorse and compunction of mind, called by St. Paul, *godly sorrow*, must be attended with *passionate* or *sensitive* sorrow, and be shewn and expressed by sighs and tears, and the usual signs of sorrow. Now in answer to this query, I observe,

I. *First*, THAT since every *wilful sin* is a transgression of the Laws of GOD, whom we acknowledge for our best *friend* and *benefactor*; as it must be infinitely displeasing to him, so it must be greatly disquieting to us, if we are sincere in our *confession*. For the soul and body act so forcibly one upon another, that a man can hardly be thought capable of being really persuaded of his having been ungrateful to his *best friend* and not be *sensibly* affected with sorrow. If he be *indeed* convinced of his having done basely by one he loves with a true affection, he is immediately stung with remorse and uneasiness, and such as it is not in his power to conceal, but which will find vent in sighs, or tears, or actions, fully expressive of his secret sense of the *baseness* of which he has been guilty. And what can be the difference between *that* and the *present* case, that it may be possible to  
be



be *sensible* of our ingratitude, and yet be able to stifle the usual expressions of it? The difference that there indeed is between the two cases argues just the contrary; inasmuch as all the reason for the necessity of *passionate* sorrow in the case of our having offended an *earthly* friend, holds with an infinite accession of strength in the case of having offended our *heavenly* Father. And agreeably hereunto we may observe,

2. *Secondly*, THAT it is recorded in *holy Scripture* of many of the most eminent saints and servants of GOD, that they testified their *inward* sorrow for sin, by the usual *external* tokens of it; from whence may very justly be inferred, that *passionate* sorrow, in some degree at least, is a commendable if not a necessary attendant upon true repentance, and that a man may well distrust the *sincerity* of his *confession*, who shews no *external* tokens of his *inward* compunction.

3. *Thirdly*, I observe that though some degrees of *passionate* sorrow must be felt by all true *penitents*; yet that the *sincerity* of repentance is not to be estimated by the *degrees* of such a *sorrow*: Because men's natural tempers and constitutions bear a great part in the occasions of that kind of *sorrow*. For according to the firmness of men's bodies and spirits, or the feebleness and infirmity of them, there will be a mighty difference in the *impressions* which the *same* convictions will make upon their *passions*.

WHEREFORE, 'tis not to be expected that men should alike shew the same *outward* signs of sorrow for the same thing, who may be all of them equally affected *inwardly*, and may have the same real detestation of their sins, and the same pious resolutions of amendment. So that if any man, in the course of his penitence and *confession* of sins, should find himself incapable of stirring up such affections of mind, upon the consideration of his sins, as he knows some others have been able to do, he should not, merely on that account, distrust the *integrity* of his *confession*. As on the other hand, a man ought not to be secure of his sincerity, though he finds himself moved to tears and sighs, and it may be to horror and confusion, upon a view of the sins that he is confessing.

BECAUSE as in one case, a hardiness of spirit arising from temper and constitution, and which is found frequently in persons of a healthy and vigorous frame, especially if they have been long accustomed to hardships and dangers, may be the true and only cause why *one* man cannot melt into all the soft and tender expressions of *passionate sorrow*; so on the other hand, *that* anguish and terror which some *others* shew may be the effect of an effeminacy of nature and a feebleness of spirit more than of any deeper or more solid convictions that they have of the evil and *baseness* of sin.

THE main thing therefore to be heeded by all is this, whether they have really an inward  
*dislike*

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*dislike* of the faults which they *confess*, and whether the sorrow and anguish which they feel at the remembrance of them, is like any thing of what they feel at the sense of any *temporal* evil; if it be thus with *the guilty*, they may be the *less solicitous* for the excesses of *passionate sorrow*, as being probably affected with that inward conviction of soul, that *godly sorrow* which *worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of*. But

4. *Fourthly*, LET it be observed farther, That there must be a mighty *difference* in the sorrow of different persons, as they may have committed sins very *different* in their kinds, and in the degrees of their enormity. There are some sins of so horrid, and unnatural, and shocking a kind, that the severest repentance is little enough to make the guilty capable of the benefit of our Saviour's sufferings; Now *their* confession ought to be attended with the most bitter remorse and self condemnation; which yet cannot be supposed, unless they feel at the same time some proportionable degrees of sensitive or *passionate sorrow*, especially where they have lived long in the avowed commission of such presumptuous sins, and in an habitual course of daring impieties.

IF such men moved by GOD's *grace* should come to consider their folly, and take a serious view of their sad and deplorable state, their convictions ought, and they necessarily must be attended with the utmost dejection of spirit, and  
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with all the other effects of a true and piercing sorrow; But then this is not alike necessary in every case.

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FOR if a man, through the blessing of a *religious education* and an *early piety*, has been so happy, as not to have defiled his conscience, with such *presumptuous* sins, but has lived in the fear of GOD, and a conformity to his will, in all the principal branches of his duty; tho' such a one through the infirmity of *nature*, and the violence of temptations, may, in many instances, have been guilty of sin and folly, yet if he condemns himself for it, and doubles his diligence for the future, he must not judge of the *sincerity* of his *repentance* by the degrees of his *sorrow*; inasmuch as he may be truly penitent, and have a hearty detestation of his folly and cowardice and ingratitude without being sensible of that horror and anguish of mind, and dejection of spirits, which is but a just and necessary expression of the heinousness of guilt, contracted by the commission of *horrid* and *flagitious* crimes. I observe,

5. *Fifthly* and *lastly*, THAT *temporal evils* are very often the plain and direct consequences of men's sins; and they plunge themselves into grievous and inextricable difficulties and distress in this life, merely by their wicked courses.

Now the *sorrow*, which men thus overwhelmed with worldly evils will probably shew, is not all to be placed to the sense of their  
*guilt,*



*guilt*, or the abhorrence of their crimes, even if they are in some degree penitent; because the smart, which they suffer from those *evils* they have brought upon themselves by their own folly, may be the truest cause of all their sorrow and anguish: Upon this account also other persons have no reason to distrust the honesty of their *confession*, if they are not moved with the consideration of their folly in the manner they observe *those* to be, who were first mentioned; because they have none of those *temporal* occasions of grief and sorrow which the *others* have, and which may have the principal share in producing the *sorrow* with which *they* are to so great a degree affected. I proceed now,

III. THIRDLY, To shew that *confession* must be always made to GOD, and that it is not of *necessity* to be made to any other, save in a few cases which I shall mention.

THE words of the *text*, as well as the reason and nature of the thing, plainly determine that this *duty* is in every case to be performed to GOD. *If we confess our sins*, says our *Apostle*, *HE is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*. Now 'tis here implied as well, that if we do not *confess our sins*, the guilt of them will still remain upon us, as also that if we do, the *confession* must be made to GOD; for of him only can St. *John* speak, when he says, *HE is faithful and just to forgive us our sins*. And the

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the nature and reason of the duty itself confirms this. SERMON  
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BECAUSE, besides that it is (as has been already shewn) a necessary part of *prayer* to GOD, it is a part of *repentance* too, which is evidently a concern between GOD and every man's own conscience. We are offenders against GOD by all our evil deeds, of what kind soever they are. For, though many of them are injurious to our neighbour, as well as odious to GOD, yet they all agree in this, that they are violations of GOD's laws, and affronts to his Majesty, and deserve his vengeance, and therefore whatever else may be fitting in some cases to be done, an application to *him* for mercy and pardon is *always* necessary, nor can any part of this duty be rightly performed without a distinct *confession* made to him of every thing whereby we have offended.

'Tis evident therefore, that the *confession* of sins so often mentioned in Scripture as the *duty* of all men is to be made to GOD; and that the promises of pardon thereupon are generally meant of such *confessions*, as are made directly and SOLELY to him. And accordingly that unless there be some special reason intervening, a distinct *confession* of secret sins should never be made in an open and *publick* manner and in the face of the *Church*.

AND there are indeed many strong reasons against the practice of such a *confession*, from the manifest mischiefs, that must ensue upon it,

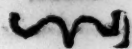


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it. Indeed, as matters are now situated in the world, and as they have generally been (save only in the very first age or two of *Christianity*) a rigorous exaction of such a severity of *discipline* would be very hurtful to the true interest of religion. I speak this with regard to crimes of the most hateful and *flagitious* kind; but it would be of a bad influence upon *religion*, if offences even of a less scandalous nature were to be publicly *confessed*. Because the best of men are guilty of many faults and imperfections, and if all their follies were to be exposed to publick notice, *that* authority and influence would be much lessened, which their circumspect behaviour might otherwise have had, towards the keeping up the *credit* of *religion*, and the maintaining decency and good order in the world.

In a word, since *charity* obliges us to conceal the faults and imperfections of *other* people, and never to report them unnecessarily to their hurt and reproach, I am sure it can be no part of *Repentance* to blaze abroad our *own* Faults: because by so doing we should do ourselves that very injury which the common rules of *charity* forbid us to do to any other persons.

HOWEVER, though this is undoubtedly true in *general*, yet it is not *universally* so, for there may be some *particular* cases, in which men's sins may have such circumstances attending them,



them, may require a *publick* and *open* acknowledgment of them to the world. Thus if a man's sins, committed in *secret*, are notwithstanding all his cunning and artful concealment of them, become *publick* and known to every one, (and this by the order of *providence* is often a sinner's case) he ought to testify his *repentance* towards G O D by as *publick* a *confession* of them himself.

BECAUSE though what he did was transacted with *privacy*, yet being now known and believed, it has had all those ill effects upon religion already, which are designed to be prevented by the *concealment*; and therefore ought now to be *publickly acknowledged* by the penitent sinner, for the very same reason for which he ought to have concealed them, if they had not been known, which is, that he may by a *publick confession* of them do the best service that he can to *religion*, by thus shewing his detestation of what does redound so much to the dishonour of it; that by thus taking upon himself the shame and disgrace of his past folly, the *honour* which is due to GOD's *laws* may be asserted, and all men may see and consider the *baseness* of sin, and the hazards and trouble they expose themselves to, who at any time, with how *great secrecy* soever, presume to commit any *deliberate* act of it.

THUS again: It may be necessary for a man to make an open and *publick* acknowledgment of his faults, though he has committed



them *secretly*, if his sins were such, that he thereby unworthily destroy'd or lessened the *good name* and reputation of any one; because there is *no other way* of making due reparation for the *injury* he has done, which yet is necessary before he can be said to have truly and thoroughly *repented*. For slander spreads itself far and wide in a very little time; and 'tis often managed with so much art by the first divulger, that it shall soon come to be *generally* believed, though quite without foundation either of truth or probability.

Now, in such a case a man lyes under a necessity of losing his *reputation* with a great part of the world, whatever pains he may honestly take for the recovery of it, unless the slanderer has the *grace* and *ingenuity* to detect his own *baseness*, and make such an acknowledgment of it, that may be as commonly known, as the slander was believed. In these and some such like cases a *publick confession* of our sins may be necessary to be made to the world, as well as unto GOD; but in *general*, no *one* man can, much less can *all* men, have a right of knowing the thoughts or secret actions of other people.

BUT if this be so, it is time I should proceed as I proposed,

IV. FOURTHLY, To shew how the custom in the *primitive Church*, of permitting an open  
and

and *publick confession* of *secret sins*, is consistent with the doctrine here advanced.

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THIS *fact* has undoubtedly the appearance of standing a little in the way of what is above asserted. But a nearer view of the case will effectually remove the difficulty. The custom of making *publick* confessions of particular crimes committed in secrecy did, questionless, begin and continue upon reasons of *piety* and religion, and if the same degrees of *faith* and *fortitude*, for which the ancient *Christians* were so justly celebrated, had always continued, such a practice might have still remained without hurt to *religion*. But still *publick confession* being manifestly a part of *ecclesiastical* discipline, and no appointment either of *Christ* or his *Apostles*, but subsisting upon the *authority* of the *Church* only, it was alterable at the pleasure of the *Governors* thereof.

BUT it is farther to be observed, that whilst this custom had the countenance of the *Church*, it was a matter that ever gave ground of jealousy, lest the indiscretion of *penitents* might tend to the disparagement of the *discipline* of the *Church*; and therefore it was that *Origen* advised that, for fear of such *indiscretions*, men should make a declaration of those heinous sins they thought required a *publick confession*, to some *Priest* in *private*, to take his direction concerning the *expediency* of confessing them, and the *manner* of doing it \*.

\* *Origen* Homil. ii. in *Psal.* xxxvii.



SOON AFTER, at the end of the *Decian* persecution, this was thought a matter of too nice a nature to be trusted with every *Presbyter* at the choice of the *penitent*, and accordingly the *Bishop* of each *diocese* constituted a new *Officer* intitled the *Penitentiary Presbyter*, for the more secure ordering the *publick penance*, that all just offence and scandal might be prevented. And yet even *this regulation* was not found sufficient to prevent the inconveniencies of the custom of making *publick* confessions of *secret* sins, and therefore the office of *penitentiary* was itself, upon a notorious occasion of scandal, abolished by *Nectarius*, *St. Chrysostom's* immediate predecessor in the *see* of *Constantinople*, whose example was followed by most of the *Bishops* of the east; whereupon the custom itself soon came into disuse\*..

Now, I think, this plain state of the case will alone shew what little reason there is to plead the *necessity*, or even the expediency of a *publick* confession of *secret* sins, from the *temporary* practice of it in the ancient *Church*.

BUT it is still farther to be noted, that although the custom of *publick* confession seemed expedient to both the *Church-Historians*, to whom we owe the account just now related, yet it was plainly otherwise thought of by all the chief *writers* of the *Church*, who lived presently after the abolishment of the *Penitentiary's*

\* *Socrat. lib. v. cap. 19. Sozomen. lib. vii. cap. 16.*

office ;

office; the words of two of which (St. Chrysostom and St. Austin) I will recite.\*—*I exhort, intreat, and urge you, says the first, to make your CONFESSION to GOD continually. I do not make you a spectacle to your fellow servants, nor do I necessitate you to disclose your sins unto men: Unfold thy Conscience before GOD, and shew thy wounds to him, and entreat of him a remedy: Shew them to him who will not reproach but heal thee. † What concern have I with men [says the other] to make my CONFESSIONS in their hearing, as if they were to cure all my anguish and trouble?*

BUT although what has been advanced must be allowed to be conclusive against the necessity of a *publick* confession of *secret* sins, yet it may be, and we know it is contended, that there is however a *necessity* of *confessing* all sins with all their aggravating circumstances in *private* to a *Priest*; and consequently, that a *confession* of *sins* to *GOD alone* will not be sufficient for obtaining his pardon. And this makes it proper, as I proposed,

V. FIFTHLY, To enquire into the ground of the *practice*, which afterwards grew by degrees

\* Παρακαλῶ καὶ δεομαι καὶ ἀντιβोलῶ ἑξομολογεῖσθαι συνεχῶς τῷ Θεῷ. εἰδὲ γὰρ εἰς θέατρον σε ἄγω τῶν συνδύλων τῶν σῶν κ. τ. λ. Chrysost. tom. 6. p. 424. Edit Savil.

† Quid mihi ergo est cum hominibus ut audiant confessiones meas, quasi ipsi sanaturi sint omnes languores meos? Aug. Confess. lib. 10. cap. 3.



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into general use of confessing *secretly* to a Priest; as also into the present doctrine and practice of the Church of Rome, grounded upon the determination of the Council of Trent concerning this point.

Now as the constant use of *private confession* was plainly introduced in the place of what was in some cases to be performed in *publick*, and it was intended to supply that defect in *discipline*, which it was supposed would be occasioned by no longer suffering a *publick* confession of *secret* sins, so the *latter* custom could not possibly stand upon any better bottom than the *former* did; and consequently, as the abolishing the *former* was an actual acknowledgment that its appointment was only *ecclesiastical*, so the same must be supposed of what was introduced in its room.

AND this appears to have been the avowed sentiment of all the eminent writers of the Church for some time; and even in the twelfth century, though the custom was grown universal, the opinions of the learned men were different concerning the *necessity* and importance of *private* confession; and many who allowed the *usefulness* thereof in some cases, contended earnestly against its *necessity*: And Gratian himself, after giving the reasons for the different sentiments of the *doctors* of the Church upon that question, declares it to be doubtful which opinion was the more probable, and affirms,

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firms, that *one* as well as the *other* had the approbation both of wise and religious men \*.

INDEED confession was at last enjoined to be made by every *faithful person of both sexes arrived to years of discretion* under the penalty of *exclusion from Church* whilst living, and *from Christian burial* when dead; but it was in the same *Lateran Council* under *Innocent III*, wherein *transubstantiation* was also decreed. But this did not hinder many among the eminent *Canonists* from declaring against the *necessity* of the thing, under the notion of a *Sacrament* instituted by *Christ* as an ordinary means of salvation.

BUT the *Council of Trent*, in much less time than a *century* after, effectually sealed up the mouths of all the members of the *Romish Church*, by *roundly* decreeing *private* confession of sins to a *Priest* to be *sacramental*, of *divine institution*, and *necessary* to *salvation*; and by *audaciously* subjecting those who should affirm the contrary to an *anathema* †.

HOWEVER it matters nothing to us how positively they have decreed upon this or any other matter. Their decisions must be examined by the *word* of GOD, as well as those of every other *council*, and if contrary thereunto are to be rejected with scorn. The Church of *Rome* has many groundless and absurd ad-

\* Vide *Gratian*. de *Pœnitentiâ*. Dist. 1. cap. 89.

† Conc. *Trident*. sess. 14. can. 6.



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ditions to the ancient faith, but this enormous power asserted to their *Clergy*, of exacting a *confession* of every particular sin from all their *communicants*, is an act of downright tyranny and arrogance, it being indeed an invasion of the *civil* as well as the *spiritual* rights of their people. I shall therefore examine the foundation upon which their *charter* is represented by themselves to stand. Now there are, I think, but three *passages* of *Scripture* alledged for the proof of this pretended power, which I will consider in their order.

I. THE *First* passage is that which contains the *commission* given by our *Saviour* to his *Disciples* of *remitting* and *retaining* sins. *Whose* *soever* *sins* *ye* *remit*, *they* *are* *remitted* *unto* *them*; *and* *whose* *soever* *sins* *ye* *retain*, *they* *are* *retained* \*. I take the *commission* herein given to the *Apostles* to be the foundation of all the sacerdotal power used by them, and claimed by their successors, the *Ministers* of *Christ's Church*, and to be the same *commission* repeated, which was given before under the terms of *binding* and *loosing* †. But although it must therefore be granted, that there is no *power* that the *Church* has a right to, that is not *virtually* contained and implied within the compass and import of these words, yet I think no argument can hold for the support of a claim of any *particular* power, grounded upon this

\* John xx. 23.

† Matt. xviii. 18.

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*general commission*, if it be not either a necessary consequence of the *power* here given in *general*, or else be in some other place of *Scripture* affirmed to be one of those instances of power, which our Saviour gave to his *Church*.

Now it never can, with any degree of modesty, be pretended, that a power of *remitting and retaining sins* (in any sense in which it can be claimed by the *Church*) may not be exercised fully, without any distinct and *particular confession* of them to a *Priest*. The ordinary and allow'd power of the Church of administering the *means of salvation*, by the word and Sacraments, will undoubtedly answer all that is express'd, or *necessarily* imply'd in the terms of this *commission*, and if the power we speak of has its first foundation in any other *texts of Scripture*, it is not to the purpose to appeal to this *commission* at all, but those *texts only* need to be examined.

2. THE *second passage* upon which the *Romanists* ground their pretended power of requiring a *particular confession of all sins* to a *Priest* is this of my *text*. They are put to their shifts, 'tis plain, when they fly to this place for succour; for although *confession of sins* is here declared to be one means of obtaining the *forgiveness* of them, and of being *cleansed from all unrighteousness*, whereby the necessity thereof is fully asserted, yet it is strange with what face it can be insisted, that *this confession* must

be



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be made to GOD's Ministers, when there is not only no mention of them, or intimation concerning them in this place, but the *confession* is represented to be therefore effectual, because it is made to *him*, who is *faithful and just* to FORGIVE us our *sins*, which words can be applied to GOD only.

3. THERE is still a passage urged in support of the *claim*, now under consideration, which is this in St. *James*, *Confess your faults one to another* \*.

BUT I have not now time to speak to this *particular*, wherefore I must leave it, together with what remains farther to be discoursed of upon this subject, to another opportunity.

NOW to GOD the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, be all honour and glory, majesty and dominion, now and evermore. *Amen.*

\* James v. 16.

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# SERMON XIV.

The Duty of *Confession*, and the Effect of *Sacerdotal Absolution* stated.

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I JOHN i. 9.

*If we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

I HAVE from these words undertaken to treat upon the duty of *confession*, and I proposed, SERMON  
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I. FIRST, To shew you in what it consists, and what the peculiar use and advantage thereof is.

II. SECONDLY, With what *affections* it must be attended.

III. THIRDLY, That it must be always made to GOD, and that it is not of *necessity* to be made



made to any other, save in a few cases then mentioned.

IV. FOURTHLY, To shew how the custom in the primitive Church of permitting an *open* and *publick confession* of *secret sins* is consistent with the doctrine here advanced.

V. FIFTHLY, To inquire into the ground of the *practice* which afterwards grew by degrees into *general use* of *confessing secretly* to a *Priest*; as also into the present doctrine and practice of the *Church of Rome* grounded upon the determination of the *Council of Trent* concerning this point.

VI. SIXTHLY, To vindicate the Doctrine and practice of the *Church of England* with regard to *confession*.

VII. SEVENTHLY, To explain what seems to be the full import and extent of the power vested in the *Church and Clergy* of *ABSOLVING* sinners.

I DISCOURSED at large upon the *four* first particulars, and in prosecution of the argument of the *fifth head* I proposed to examine those *texts* of *Scripture*, upon which the *Romanists* principally ground their claim of the exorbitant power they use, of subjecting all the members of their Church to a distinct *confession* of all their sins *privately* to a *Priest*, as a necessary qualification for receiving the *Lord's supper*.

THESE *passages*, I told you, were *three*; *two* of which I then considered; and I come now to the *third*, which are the words of *St. James*, ch. v. ver. 16.

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3. *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a RIGHTEOUS man availeth much.* SERMON  
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1. Now there are many learned men who understand these words as directing *all* persons in the day of *affliction* and distress to *confess their faults*, that is, to acknowledge the *injuries* they have done to the name, estate, or person, of others; but not to the *Church*, nor to the *Ministers* of the *Church*, but to those only whom they have offended. And the words taken by themselves, and independently of the foregoing direction concerning the *calling for the Elders of the Church*, may very well be taken in this meaning.

2. OTHERS look upon the words as containing matter of advice to persons in *affliction* to confess their faults of all kinds to such of their *Christian* brethren, whether *Elders* [or *Ministers* of the *Church*] or not, of whose judgment or piety they have an opinion, for the benefit of their advice and *prayers*. And there is nothing in the words that *absolutely* forbids this interpretation.

3. BUT forasmuch as some *manuscripts* connect this direction about *confession* with what is before said of calling in the *Elders* of the *Church*, with the particle [*οὖν*.] *Therefore*; and since it is the undoubted office of the *Elders* or *Ministers* of the *Church*, to pray for others, and they are ordered to be called in for that  
very



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very purpose, in the passage foregoing; and since the efficacy of the  *fervent prayer* of the persons to whom  *confession* is to be made is exemplified by the efficacy of  *Elias's* prayer, who was a  *Prophet* and  *Minister* of GOD; it seems not improbable that the  *confession* here directed in the case of sickness may be principally meant of confession to the  *Ministers* of  *Christ*.

4. BUT tho' this should be allowed, the  *Popish doctrine* of  *confession* stands as naked of all support from hence, as if any one of the foregoing interpretations was fixed upon for true. For as the  *Popish confession* is made a necessary qualification of partaking of the  *Lord's supper* at all times, as well as in  *sickness*, so it is declared to be made in order to obtain  *absolution* from the mouth of the  *Priest*, and not for the benefit of his  *prayers*, which yet is all that is mentioned by St.  *James*, or that seems to be meant.

FOR there is no manner of reason to understand the words— *If he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him*—In the sense that the learned Dr.  *Hammond* does; namely—That the sick person shall receive  *absolution* of his sins from the  *Bishop* or  *Priest* then visiting him—No, not if the reading be allowed to be ἀφεθῆ-σεται, and to be used  *impersonally*, which has been much insisted on. For although it will not be denied that this word might  *afterwards* very usually import such a kind of remission of sins,

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as was to be conveyed by the means of a formal *absolution* pronounced by a *Priest*, yet no such use of the word can, I presume, be shewn till many years after this *epistle* of St. *James* was written.

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THE very word is used in the sense of GOD's forgiving sins no less than four several times in the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter of St. *Matthew*, within the compass of two verses \*, and it is used *impersonally* also in two of them, and yet, I suppose, it will not be contended that the *Evangelist* designed, by the use of the phrase [*ἀφεθῆσθαι*] *it shall be forgiven*,—to shew, that the forgiveness was to be obtained through the use of a *formal absolution*. If indeed the necessity of a formal *absolution* by a *Priest* upon a *confession* of sins to him can first be shewn to be always necessary for forgiveness, then the word must, both in St. *Matthew* and St. *James*, be interpreted of such an *absolution*; but till then 'tis very vain thus to argue for the meaning of a word in *Scripture*, from the signification it had some *centuries* afterwards. ✓

So that, as was before said, the whole design of St. *James*'s direction concerning a *confession* of sins in time of sickness appears to have been for obtaining the *prayers* of those thro' whose ministration it has pleased GOD to convey his blessings to men, who can by no other way be so well instructed to adapt their petitions to the

\* St. Marth. xii. 31, 32.

necessities



necessities of the *penitent*, as by having the true state of his soul laid before them, by a *confession* of those sins of which he has been guilty, and upon the account of which, it may be, the affliction under which he is labouring was sent him.

UPON the whole therefore, it is mighty plain, that the *Romanists* have not built their doctrine of *confession* to a *Priest*, as a necessary part of repentance, and an ordinary means of eternal salvation, upon any one *text* of *Scripture*, that can with any probability be interpreted to the sense they put upon it.

AND I shall only observe farther upon this point, that the *antient fathers*, who were the best judges of what was the *Scripture-doctrine* and practice, and who could not be ignorant of the *discipline* of their own times, knew nothing of any *private confessions* to a *Priest*, as of necessity to salvation, or as at any time in use but for *expediency* only, and quite for other ends than the obtaining *private absolution*, as is notorious to all who have made any examination into this matter. It is time now to proceed as I proposed,

VI. SIXTHLY, To vindicate the doctrine and practice of the *Church of England*, with regard to *confession*.

I shall not need to prove that our Church requires its members to send for the *Elders* or *Priests* of the *Church* in times of sickness, for their

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their prayers and advice, or, that she requires *a special confession* to be made to them in certain cases; the *office* and *rubrics* for the *visitation of the sick*, wherein these things are required, are known to every body. I am however to shew that she enjoins nothing herein but what is agreeable to the *Apostle's* direction, and the practice of the Church as before explained.

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I THINK there can be nothing urged as *seemingly* repugnant to either, but the *Rubric* in the *visitation of the sick*, where it is directed that the *sick person shall be moved to make a SPECIAL CONFESSION of his sins, if he feels his conscience troubled with any weighty matter, and that after such confession the Priest shall ABSOLVE him after the sort there prescribed, if the penitent humbly and heartily desires it.*

Now to prevent any mistakes that men might run into, as if our Church required any thing like *auricular confession* herein, and so differs but little from the Church of Rome in this matter; I shall endeavour, as distinctly as I can, to clear up this point; which I think may be sufficiently done, by laying before you the following observations.

I. FIRST, That our Church does not demand a *special confession of sins* from the penitent, but only orders that he be *moved* to make one; which shews that she does not look upon it as a matter of *religious duty*, but only as an act of *spiritual prudence* and discretion; if she had



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thought the sinner could not be pardoned without such a *special confession*, she would have urged and commanded him to have done it; but she only *advise*s it; whereas the *Church of Rome* insists upon it as *necessary* for salvation, and as a *sacramental* means of pardon.

2. SECONDLY, As our *Church* only *advise*s such a *special confession*, so 'tis only in the case of *extreme sickness*, when the person confessing is supposed to be incapable of coming to *Church* to receive *absolution* by joining in the publick service, in common with other true believers. But the *Church of Rome*, as she peremptorily requires a *special confession*, so she requires it at stated times, in health as well as sickness; and of all persons, at least as often as they are admitted to the sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*.

3. THIRDLY, As our *Church* only *advise*s this *confession*, and that only in *extreme sickness*, so the *confession* which she then *advise*s is only of such things as lay heavy upon the mind of the penitent, when his conscience is troubled with some *weighty matter*; whereas the *Church of Rome* commands a distinct *confession*, of all sins of all kinds, with all their several circumstances of *guilt* and *aggravation*.

4. FOURTHLY, And which is chiefly to be observed, as our *Church* only *advise*s, and does not command this *confession*, and this also in the cases mentioned *only*, so the reason of her advising it is not in order to a *Priestly absolution*,  
tion,

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tion, but only for the ease and quiet of the penitent's mind: The Priest is no where directed upon such a *confession's* being made to proceed to give him *absolution*; nay, he is not so much as to admonish the penitent, to ask for it, or desire it, only if the penitent, from whatever cause moved, should *humbly and heartily* desire it, then 'tis not to be denied him. But the doctrine and practice of the *Church of Rome* is in every instance contrary to all this.

UPON the whole, I think 'tis plain, that the design of our *Church* in this matter is intirely to provide for the ease and quiet of men's minds, when they are brought to the terror and distress of a *sick bed*. For, knowing there are many cases of men who having lived in the commission of presumptuous sins, and thereby *excommunicated* themselves from *Christ's Church*, and cut themselves off from the benefit of that pardon which is to be had by a due partaking of the *sacred offices* of it; who at last may see the folly and wickedness of their past practices, and shew all signs of a hearty and sincere *repentance*: I say, the *Church*, knowing that this may sometimes be the case, has, in great tenderness and compassion to such as are in it, appointed a *form of absolution* expressed in full and strong terms, whereby such persons may be *restored* to the *Church*, and the benefits accruing to the true members of it.

BUT although the *form* is expressed in very strong terms, it is not to be thought of more efficacy



efficacy for pardon, than the others which are ordinarily used; but being expressed in terms distinctly declarative of the power committed by *Christ* to his *Church*, it might be looked upon as a means of giving comfort to the bleeding minds of such as are under the sore distress and agonies of a reviling conscience, even when they are at the same time under the terrors of death; and this might be the reason of allowing the use of it. *To afflicted souls pity should be shewn\**, GOD has promised that he will himself have mercy on his afflicted, that *he will not break a bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax* †. And therefore it well became the *Church* to give this power to her *Priests* of shewing compassion to their brethren, by administering all possible means of *consolation* to them; and the conduct of the *Church* in thus appointing a *special confession* of *sins*, upon the occasion, under the limitations, and for the ends by her proposed, will appear highly reasonable from the several considerations following.

I. FIRST, A *special confession* of such sins as lye heavy upon a man's mind will be very useful, because he will hereby give such a proof to himself of his own *sincerity*, as he cannot do by any other means: Because if he lyes upon a *sick bed*, which is the time in which this method is particularly recommended, his appetite to his old sins being palled, if not destroyed,

\* Job vi. 15. † Isaiah xlix. 13.

through the weakness of his body, 'twill be uncertain to him, whether upon the return of health and spirits, he may not *himself* return to his former follies; and whether all the present disturbance of his mind is not rather the effect of the *fears* he is under of the punishment which he is conscious he deserves, than of any *real abhorrence* that he has of his crimes. Whereas his *confessing* of his sin is an acknowledgment of his *shame*, and he does thereby take upon himself that reproach which is due to his folly. And this, as it is an argument of his *present conviction*, so it will be a good means towards the preserving him from *future* transgressions.

2. SECONDLY, Another *advantage* arising from a *special confession*, of such crimes as lye heavy upon the conscience of a penitent, is the comfort that he will receive by thus unbosoming himself; and this not only on account of the *ingenuity* of such a practice, but also from the *ghostly counsel and advice* he will receive from one, who, being made particularly acquainted with the state of his soul, is better able to make a judgment of his case, and to apply the proper remedies, than the *distressed penitent* can himself do. Sins of a very *heinous* nature, if a man's conscience is once fully awake, will be apt to confound and startle him even to *horror* and despair, and in such a distracted state of mind, 'twill be very difficult for him to put himself into a wise becoming method of



*repentance*; his mind being alarmed and his imagination confused, he will be at a loss where to begin a *repentance*, which he apprehends to be *difficult*, and which yet he is fully convinced must be begun *immediately*, or he must be ruined *eternally*.

IN such a case, what can be so seasonable as the sober advice of a *discreet Minister* of GOD's *word*? Or, who more proper to direct him to the true means of appeasing those sad tumults of his soul, than one whose profession and business it is to instruct men in the ways of their *peace* and *salvation*? I am sure, as the soberest *counsels* are necessary in such cases, so it may be presumed there are no persons more likely to give them, than they to whom is committed the *word* and *ministry* of *reconciliation*. But,

3. THIRDLY, This advice of our *Church* is very reasonable and commendable, because it may happen that the *penitent* being a person of a *tender* make and *constitution*, and easily subject to impressions of fear and distrust, may be apt in the *evil day* of *affliction*, to *magnify* his faults and look upon his sins as *unpardonable*, and himself as a sinner out of the reach of mercy, and beyond *hope* of *redemption*; when at the same time he may be indeed a sincere penitent, and acceptable in the sight of GOD, as being truly possessed with that *broken* and *contrite heart*, which the *Psalmist* assures us GOD *will not despise*.

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Now the *feebleness* of such men's spirits makes them very improper judges of their own condition, it makes them distrustful of every thing which their own minds suggest to them as an argument of peace and comfort. So that the satisfaction which they may receive from the well-grounded assurances of a spiritual guide, is *valuable* beyond expression. To have their drooping spirits raised, their fears and jealousies removed, and their *despair* changed into *hope*, and a modest holy *confidence*, are  *blessings* plainly inestimable.

INDEED the *diffidence* and distrustfulness of some men is such, as the most prudent advice may not be able to remove, yet when *that* is assisted with GOD's *blessing*, it always will; and wherein can men more reasonably expect that *blessing*, than in the wholesome advice of those whom GOD has called to be the *stewards* of the *mysteries* of his kingdom, for the relief and benefit of men's souls. As the *advice* of a prudent *friend* in such a case must be of use and comfort, so especially will *his* be so, who by *office* is ordained, and commissioned to give it.

THE case we now speak of is not to be helped by the advice of any, but those who by their skill in the *Scriptures*, and by their dexterity in applying them to particular cases, are qualified to resolve the doubts with which the *penitent's* mind is so unhappily disordered. The *devil* never fails to attack men on the weakest



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fide; accordingly when a *penitent* is under a conflict in his own mind concerning the state of his soul, so as even to doubt and question his title to GOD's promises, it is agreeable to the craft of so *subtle* an *adversary* to be continually suggesting what will most effectually increase the *penitent's fears*, that, if possible, he may defeat all the good effects of his *godly sorrow*, by hurrying him into a *despair* of pardon and mercy.

THEN it is that men are ever destroying the peace of their own minds, and the power of performing their religious duties in a composed manner, by raising objections and undermining their hope and holy confidence, through a misapplication of those *very Scriptures*, which were written for their instruction and comfort.

WHO then are so proper to be apply'd to, as they whose *lips* should *preserve knowledge*, and who are appointed by *Christ* himself for the instruction of the *ignorant*, and the settling the *doubtful* and wavering? For as *they* have an *authority* for doing what they undertake, so their education, their freedom from secular employments, their daily studies, and the very exercise of their *function*, do all join in justifying the opinion that I believe all truly religious persons entertain, of *their* being, of all degrees and orders of men, the best qualified to help their brethren in the *distress* we are speaking of.

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FOR this is really giving the *Clergy* no *more* distinction, and paying them no *more* deference with regard to their skill in the business of their vocation and office, than is readily allowed to men of every *other profession* whatsoever. And yet, should the *Ministers of Christ* set their demands a little higher, and should they boast somewhat more of their power and authority upon the account, as well of the *commission* with which they are intrusted for the *edification* of *Christians*, as of the *promise* that *Christ* has given of his presence *always even to the end of the world*, I am sure they would have *no cause to be ashamed*.

Now this good use that may be made of the assistance of *Christ's Ministers* is an evident reason, why persons under the affliction supposed, ought to send for them, that by a *confession* of their *sins*, they may so open the condition of their souls, that their *guides* may make a right judgment of their repentance, and of those tokens of *godly sorrow* that they shew, and so by *counsel* and *advice*, by prayer, and by a *formal absolution* (if earnestly desired) may quiet their consciences, and remove their scruples and doubts.

4. FOURTHLY, As some men are constitutionally disposed to *distrust* and *fear*, so are others in the same degree inclined to *confidence* and self-sufficiency, to put the fairest gloss upon their imperfections, so as to be with much difficulty brought to condemn themselves as guilty of any thing



thing *grossly* criminal; they are rather apt to flatter themselves into a *good opinion* of their life and conversation however exceptionable; are ready to charge all their wicked actions upon chance, necessity, infirmity, or any thing rather than their own baseness and folly.

Now this, though a common, is a very dangerous *temper* of mind, and such as, if persisted in, must be *fatal*. Indeed it may be said, that though men will keep up their spirits in the day of *prosperity*, yet in the day of *adversity* they will *consider*. But then it must also be remembered, that since the natural humour of men's minds has a mighty power and influence upon them, and is apt to stick close even to the last; a man that is of that self-conceited temper, I have been now speaking of, will be in great danger of thinking too favourably of himself, and of making but a *slight inquiry* into the *aggravations* of those sins he *does* accuse himself of, and of letting others go for infirmities, which are indeed great and gross provocations, and so may speak *peace* to his soul, when there is *no peace*: I say, since this is usually the case of men of such tempers, if left to themselves, to take their *own* methods of *repentance*, 'tis plain that they would be in the greatest need of a faithful adviser, to *exhort* and *rebuke with all authority*.

It can hardly be thought that a man, when he is under the apprehensions of a speedy dissolution, can shut his ears against the declared senti-

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sentiments and advice of one who can have no SERMON  
interest to deceive him, and especially if his XIV.  
advice comes supported with sober and good reasons.

As it therefore behoves all men to beware of a groundless *security*, so it should be the particular care of those people whose tempers incline them to think *too well* of themselves to seek counsel at the hand of others: and not to trust the settling the eternal state of their souls upon their own *single* judgments, but to seek out for, and call in such persons to their assistance, who having an interest in the salvation of *other* men's *souls* as well as *their own*, will be likely to give them the most *impartial* directions how to preserve themselves from that ruin, which their too great *confidence* and security might otherwise have ended in.

These are, I doubt not, some of the *reasons* which moved our *Church* to recommend the making a *special confession* of such things as lye heavy upon the mind of a *penitent*, and they are such reasons as will justify the conduct and shew the prudence of every one who complies with her *direction* herein. I come now,

VII. SEVENTHLY and LASTLY, To explain what seems to be the full import and extent of the power vested in the *Church* and *Clergy* of ABSOLVING *sinners*.

As



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AS THE design of our Saviour's life and death was to reconcile mankind to GOD, and obtain the pardon of our sins, and the salvation of our souls; so the purpose of his erecting a *Church* upon earth, was for the worship of GOD according to his will, and that the blessings of grace and pardon might be conveyed to *particular* persons, thro' the use of such external *rites of worship*, as he in his infinite wisdom should appoint.

FOR it is very plain, that although *faith* and *repentance* are the *indispensable* conditions of *pardon*, yet they will not of themselves procure it. The *rites* and ordinances appointed by *Christ* must be observed also, and *they* are all to be celebrated through the intervention and *ministry* of those who are *ordained* for *men in things pertaining to GOD*, and who are for that reason called *Ministers of the Gospel* \*; *Able Ministers of the New Testament* †, to whom GOD hath given the *ministry* and committed the word of RECONCILIATION, whereby men's *trespasses* are no longer imputed unto them; *Ambassadors for Christ* ‡; *Ministers of Christ*, and *Stewards of the mysteries of GOD* ||.

SINCE therefore men are not all their own *Priests*, but the *manifold* grace of the *Gospel* is communicated through the means of those who are appointed to *minister* in the *Church*, the *commission* given by our Saviour to his *Apostles* and their successors, concerning *remitting*

\* Heb. iii. 6, 7. † 2 Cor. iii. 6, 11. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, 20. || 1 Cor. iv. 1.

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and retaining sins, (the nature and extent of which is the subject of our present inquiry) must necessarily invest them with all that power and authority which naturally follows from the very exercise of *that ministry* to which the *Scriptures* affirm they were called.

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Now some of the principal acts of power in the *Ministers of Christ*, and which are essential parts of their office are these that follow:

1. FIRST, The administration of the *sacraments of baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*.

2. SECONDLY, The offering up *prayers* and *intercessions* to GOD in the name of *Christ*, for the pardon of sin.

3. THIRDLY, The exercise of Church discipline. As these are all of them true and proper acts of the *Sacerdotal* office, and are allowed to belong to the *Ministers* of the *Church*, by all who look upon the Church as a true *society*, with proper officers for the regular administration of the affairs of it, so I shall need only to shew, in what sense, and with what propriety, these *ministerial acts* can be called the *remitting* and *retaining sins*.

1. FIRST, Let us inquire in what just construction the power of administering the *sacraments of Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, may be called a power of *remitting* or *retaining sins*.

1. As to the *sacrament of Baptism*; this was always reputed a grand *means* of *pardon*, and an *universal absolution* to all who are rightly qualified to receive it. And this is no more than



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than what St. Peter affirms of it, when he warns the Jews [who were pricked in the heart from his sermon to them] *to repent and be baptized—in the name of Jesus Christ for the REMISSION of sins* \*, and it is perfectly agreeable also to that *article* of the Nicene Creed, where we acknowledge *one Baptism, for the REMISSION of sins*.

2. THE same effect is universally ascribed by the antients to the *Lord's Supper*. This was usually called the τὸ τέλειον, the *perfection* of a Christian, or what rendered those who rightly partook of it, *complete Christians*, it being ever esteemed to be to such the means of obtaining GOD's *pardon* and the succours of his *grace*, and a title to eternal *happiness*.

AND doubtless Christians are sufficiently encouraged to entertain such expectations from a right participation of those *holy mysteries*, from the very words of the *institution*, wherein our blessed Saviour declares the *cup* [or wine] in that Sacrament, to be the *blood of the New Testament, which was shed for many for the REMISSION of sins* †.

NOW forasmuch as both these *sacraments* are administered by the hands of Christ's *Ministers* to such persons ONLY as they judge qualify'd to receive the same, they may well be said to exercise the power of *remitting* or *retaining sins*, whenever they admit men to, or repell

\* Acts ii. 38. † Matth. xxvi. 28.

them

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them from partaking of *either*, provided they act in both cases according to their duty, and to the *real* condition and state of those who are admitted or rejected. SERMON XIV.

AGREEABLY hereunto the *Ministers* of *Christ* were in all ages allowed to be *judges* of the qualifications of such as offered themselves for the reception of either *sacrament*, and to have a power of acting according to their own *discretion*, with regard to the admitting or rejecting those who offered themselves: And although, if they judged *wrong* or acted *partially*, their proceedings were looked upon, and very justly, as having no manner of spiritual effect, either for the benefit of the person *admitted*, or to the hurt of him who was *rejected*; yet, forasmuch as the *Ministers* of the *Church* had the power of administering or withholding those holy *ordinances*, and they were moreover always to be administered *SOLELY* by *their* hands, it was, with good reason, usual to apply to them our Saviour's *commission* of *remitting* and *retaining sins*, with regard to their administration of both *sacraments*.

2. *SECONDLY*, The offering up *prayers*, and *intercessions* to *GOD* in the name of *Christ* for the pardon of sin.

As these *prayers* made a great part of the *antient liturgies*, so they do also of *ours*. Our Saviour has inserted a petition for the *forgiveness* of *sins* in his most perfect form of prayer. And such petitions are both an essential part of di-





vine worship, and when offered at the *throne* of *grace* by GOD's Ministers are also of undoubted efficacy for the pardon of sin, if accompanied with due qualifications in those, who thus apply for it, in the use of GOD's own *ordenance*.

Now here, as in the foregoing instances, this most valuable effect of a due compliance with the appointed means of *grace*, being imparted thro' the ministrations of those who are called to the service of the *Altar*, the power of *remitting sins* may be ascribed to them, just in the same sense and with the same propriety, as St. *Paul* ascribes to himself and to *Timothy*, the *salvation* of those who obtained that blessing through *their* respective preaching and ministry \*.

3. THIRDLY, The last instance of *sacerdotal* *remitting* or *retaining sins* is shewn by the exercise of *Church Discipline*; that is by a sentence of *excommunication* upon notorious offenders, and a *relaxation* of that sentence, by restoring them, upon their penitence, to the communion of the Church.

THE right of exercising this power is even founded in the reason of the thing, as the *Church* is a real *society* and invested with the usual authority of all societies, I mean that of receiving those for members who are willing to submit to the rules thereof, and of excluding the disobedient and refractory.

\* Rom. xi. 14. 1 Cor. ix. 22. 1 Tim. iv. 16.

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BUT besides this *reason* for discipline in the Church, our Saviour has expressly given this power by commanding every injured person, if he cannot otherwise have redress, to apply in the last resort to the Church, and by ordering, that if the offender will not hear the Church, he should be esteemed as a *heathen man and a Publican*, that is, as one who has no more right to the privileges of the Church, than a *Heathen* and a *Publican*. Upon which [as explanatory of his meaning] he tells his disciples, that *whatsoever they should bind on earth should be bound in heaven*, and whatsoever they should loose on earth should be loosed in heaven\*.

AND the example of St. Paul in the case of the incestuous Corinthian, and the reproofs and directions he gave to the Church of Corinth upon that occasion, are a full proof of the power and the duty of every other particular Church with regard both to the exclusion and re-admission of Members, and also to the effect of such sentences upon those who are concerned in them.

FORASMUCH then as the only promised means of receiving the benefits and privileges of Christianity, are the *ordinances of religion*, they who have a power of excluding sinners from a participation of the same, and who have also a power of restoring penitents to the privileges they had forfeited, may certainly, in a very just sense, be said to *retain or remit* their sins.

\* Matth. xviii. 15, 16, 17, 18.



*The Duty of Confession, and the*

WHEN to this it is objected, that the Church hereby assumes to itself the power of damning or saving men, of exalting them to heaven or thrusting them down to hell as she thinks fit; they, who make a charge so false and scandalous as this is, are to be told, that they must answer it to GOD for their spite and malice herein, for they are themselves conscious that they do not argue hereby against any privilege or authority *really* claimed by our Church, but only endeavour to discredit her by imputing to her a claim, which she utterly abhors as wicked and abominable.

THE power of pardoning sin in GOD is quite of another sort from what is pretended to by the Church. GOD's power is *inherent, original, and absolute*; his knowledge of the qualifications of the pardoned is *infallible*, and the effect of the pardon is *certain and irreversible*. Nothing of this kind either is or can be meant when the power of *remitting sins* is ascribed to the Church, her authority is all *derived*, and *subordinate*, her judgment *fallible* and *uncertain*, and her sentence *conditional* and *reversible*; and under these limitations why may not the Church be supposed to be invested with the power of *remitting and retaining sins*, without any entrenchment upon GOD's *Sovereignty*?

I SHALL therefore venture to leave this matter to the judgment of any impartial reasoner upon the following bare state of the case.

CHRIST

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**CHRIST** has purchased *forgiveness* of *sins* for all men by the merit of his blood; he has committed to the *Ministers* of his *Church* the power of conveying the *pardon* of *sins* to particular persons, by administering to them the *ordinances* of religion by him appointed; these *ordinances* have their effect *conditionally*, according to the real state and disposition of those who partake of them; so that although it must be within the power of the *Ministers* of the *Church* to admit men to, or repell them from the holy *ordinances*, according to the best judgment they can make of their having or not having the qualifications required, yet forasmuch as they are all weak and peccable as well as other men, and so may both judge *erroneously* and act *partially*, the effect of their ministrations must always be answerable to the *real* qualifications of those who are either to partake of them, or are repell from them.

ACCORDINGLY, neither would a *good man*, if repell from the *Lord's Supper*, or any other ordinary means of pardon and absolution, by a mistaken or a partial judgment, be the worse for such a censure; nor would a *bad man*, if admitted to a participation thereof, be at all the better for such an indulgence.

HOWEVER, as the name of *Christ*, is *that* ALONE by which we *can be saved*; so the means of salvation through him being all *ordinarily* to be conveyed to us by the hands of his *Ministers*, there can be no presumption in a-



scribing to *them* the power of *remitting* and *retaining sins*, in the sense and under the restrictions here laid down.

AND it is moreover the plain *duty* of all men to seek for the *pardon* of their *sins* in the way and method so expressly taught and prescribed; and there is neither rashness nor severity in declaring, that if any one puts a CONTEMPT upon our LORD's appointments, and REFUSES to seek for pardon in the use of the external means of *absolving* men from their *sins*, which He in his wisdom has commanded, no pretended strength of faith or purity of manners will be sufficient to intitle such a one to the *promises* of the *Gospel*.

WHAT has been hitherto said upon this head has been concerning *publick* absolutions only, it may not be improper to close the subject with a word or two concerning the effect and importance of those that are *private*. No doubt all *private* ministrations, where those only are to be had, are of the same effect with such as are performed in *publick*. But there seems to be a notion among some, that there is something of a *peculiar* efficacy in those that are *private*, and administered to *single* persons, beyond what the prayers of the *publick service* have, for the pardon of penitents. What may have given occasion for this odd fancy may be the strong and express terms, in which the *absolution* in the *office* of the *visitation of the sick* is delivered. But doubtless the *form* makes  
no

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no alteration in the *effect*. And there are many *Collects* in the daily service that are as effectual, and as *proper* forms of *absolution*, as that now mentioned. And the *Lord's Prayer*, which is, as it ought to be, a part of every *office*, is as complete a form of absolution from the petition therein for the *forgiveness of our trespasses*, when pronounced by a *Priest*, as any other, made to be pronounced by him *only*, under the title of an *absolution*. If then it be asked to what purpose the *peculiar form* in the said office was added; the answer is as before in the former part of this discourse—for the comfort of the distressed and anxious *penitent* from so solemn a declaration made by his spiritual guide, of the *pardonableness* of those sins, which were so great a *burden* to his mind. And farther than this I know of no necessity for any *forms* of *absolution*, other than what we have in many prayers of the *Church* both of daily and occasional use.

Now to GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY GHOST, three Persons, and one ever-blessed GOD, be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour and Glory, Praise, Might, Majesty and Dominion, both now and evermore. *Amen.*





DUÆ  
CONCIONES  
AD  
CLERUM

Habitæ in Templo B. Mariæ apud  
CANTABRIGIENSES;

Hæc pro Gradu Baccalaureatûs,  
Illa pro Gradu Doctôratûs,  
In Sacrâ Theologiâ;

A JOANNE WARREN, S. T. P. Collegii  
Regin. Cantab. nupèr Socio.



DUE

CONCIONES

AD

CLENUM

Habitu in Templo B. Mariae apud  
ICANTARIGIENSES;



Hic pro O...  
Illa pro G...

In Sacra Theologia;

A JOHANNI WARRIN, S.T.P. Collegii  
Regii Cantabrigie Socii.

# Concio Prima.

Ep. S<sup>ti</sup> Pauli ad Philippenses.

Cap. ii. Comm. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Sic scriptum legimus.

5. Τῷτο γὰρ Φρονείσθω ἐν ὑμῖν ὁ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

6. Ὃς ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων εἶχ ἄρπαγ-  
μόν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ.

7. Ἀλλ' ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσε, μορφὴν δούλου λα-  
βὼν, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος.

8. Καὶ σχήματι ἐυρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος, ἐταπεί-  
νωσεν ἑαυτὸν, γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι  
θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ.

5. *Is sit affectus in vobis, qui fuit  
& in Christo Jesu.*

6. *Qui cum esset in formā Dei non  
duxit rapinam parem esse cum Deo.*

I

7. *Sed*



7. *Sed ipse se exinanivit, formâ servi acceptâ, similis hominibus factus.*  
 8. *Et habitu compertus ut homo, ipse se summisit; factus obediens ad mortem, mortem autem Crucis.*

CONCIO  
I.

**A**POSTOLUS in initio hujus capitis præcipua charitatis & benevolentiae officia *Christianis* commendaturus, eos vehementer orat & obtestatur ut *contentionem omnem*, *superbiam*, & *inanem gloriam* a se protinus amoverent: Utpote quæ gratum affectuum & animarum concentum omnino convellerent, unde alii ab aliis se juncti in diversas partes & studia abirent. *Si qua, inquit, consolatio in Christo, si quod solatium charitatis, si qua communio spiritûs, si quæ viscera & miserationes, sitis itidem affecti, unanimes, eandem charitatem habentes, nihil per contentionem, aut inanem gloriam, gerentes.*

HANC

HANC deinde *doctrinam* inculcat ex *salvatoris* nostri exemplo, qui, virtutibus & dignitate longè omnibus præcellens, humilitatis tamen, benevolentix & morum suavitatis sese dedit specimen & exemplar. Quippe cùm esset in *formâ Dei*, nec duxit rapinam parem esse cum Deo, ipse tamen se exinanivit, & *formâ servi acceptâ*, factus est obediens ad mortem, mortem autem crucis.

Ex quâ *Apostoli* argumentatione colligere est, *humilitatem*, quomodo-  
cunque multis ducatur despiciatui, esse  
revera virtutem magni pretii, omni-  
que existimatione dignam. Illam e-  
nim *Apostolus* ponit ipsius *charitatis*  
aliorumque fere officiorum omnium  
fundamentum. Nec immerito; Nam  
qui miti sunt & vere submisso animo,  
neque sese efferunt magnificè, nec  
alios excelsiori loco positos indignè  
ferunt;



CONCIO  
I.

ferunt; quin sorte suâ contenti omnium paci student & commodo; rixarum anfas ipsi non arripiunt, & aliorum contentiones sopire, motusque animorum comprimere quàm possunt maximè conantur.

Non mirum igitur quòd animi affectum tam uberes utilitates fructus præbentem ab *Apostolo* sollicitè *Philippensibus* suis commendatum cernimus.

LITEM olim habuerunt *orthodoxi* cum *Arianis*, & Fidei Catholicæ propugnatores *etiamnum* habent cum *Arii* *Socinique* sequacibus de genuino huius loci sensu. Locus enim ex paucis est *unus*, quem & *Catholici* & *Hæretici* in partes suas vicissim trahere fatagunt, & ex quo *singuli* suæ ipsorum, quam tuentur, sententiæ argumentum se posse eruere contendunt.

MIHI igitur in animo est rationes *singulorum* excutere, quibus *causæ* suæ suppetias hinc ferre conantur: Nec vanus, uti spero, auguror me æquis iudicibus liquidò ostensurum, *Apostolum* nostrum hoc in loco, ut alibi semper, omninò stare ex partibus ORTHODOXORUM. Hoc interea mihi *postulati* loco habebitur, nempe, cùm, quò illustrior et conspectior sit *Christi* dignitas eò argumentum *Apostolicum* de humilis animi necessitate validius fuerit & fortius, illum omnino loci sensum esse eligendum, qui *Christi* excellentiæ plurimùm tribuerit, si modò *dictionum* & *contextus* ratio non obstiterit.

Ut quod proponitur dilucidius exequar,

I. PRIMO, Ostendere conabor CHRISTI ESSENTIALEM DEITATEM, five CONSUBSTANTIALEM DEO PATRI NATURAM  
hoc



CONCIO  
I.

hoc ex loco invictis rationibus deduci posse; deinde *Arii & Socini*, quoad potero, *commenta* diluam, quibus locum hunc celebrem aliò contorquere nituntur.

II. SECUNDÒ, Disquiram quo in sensu CHRISTUS se *exinanivisse* dicitur.

III. TERTIÒ, *Affectus* illos singulatim vobis ob oculos ponam ad quos excitandos præclarum hoc *salvatoris* exemplum apprimè conducit.

I. PRIMÒ, ostendere conabor CHRISTI ESSENTIALEM DEITATEM, si-  
ve CONSUBSTANTIALEM DEO PATRI NATURAM hoc ex loco invictis rationibus deduci posse; & deindè *Arii & Socini commenta*, quoad potero, diluam, quibus locum hunc celebrem aliò contorquere nituntur.

SINGULA

SINGULA ferè eximii hujus loci verba diligenti examine & disquisitione sunt digna.

I. PRIMA Phrasis notanda hæc est.  
Ὅς ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων, -- *Qui cum esset in FORMA DEI.* Certum est hanc dictionem nusquam alibi in sacrâ paginâ usurpari. At *Apostolus* noster in *Epistolâ ad Colossenses*\*, *Jesum Christum* nuncupat εἰκόνα five *imaginem Dei invisibilis*. Et non ita à se invicem significatione distant hæ duæ *Phrases* ut non idem prorsus denotare censeantur.

QUID autem, εἰκὼν five *imago DEI* velit, ipse *Apostolus* in loco citato actutùm explicat, ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τῷ Θεῷ τῷ ἀορατῷ πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως — *Qui est IMAGO DEI invisibilis, PRIMOGENITUS omnis creaturæ*, hoc est natus five genitus, antequam quicquam creatum extiterit; quippe qui ipse fuit re-

\* Coloss. i. 15.



Concio I. rum omnium creatarum conditor.

Ubi satis disertè docet *Apostolus*; Christum ergo dici DEI *imaginem*, quia *filius* DEI fuit ineffabili geniturâ æternus, *Patris* utique *invisibilis* naturâ pollens & attributis.

In initio *Epistolæ* ad *Hebræos* postquam sanctus Author vocasset *Christum DEI filium*, & *Hæredem universorum*, per quem fecit & sæcula, statim subjungit illum esse ἀπάντα μα τῆς δόξης, καὶ χαράν τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ — *Splendorem Paternæ gloriæ*, & figuram five *imaginem substantiæ ejus*, unde constare videtur *Authori*, five *Paulo* five alteri, propositum fuisse indicare ecclesiæ, *Christi filiationem* imprimis esse fundamentum & causam, cujus gratiâ vocatur & IMAGO DEI, & CHARACTER *substantiæ ejus*; at *filius* hoc solo in sensu *Patris imaginem* referre

re dicitur quòd particeps sit ejusdem naturæ pariúmque perfectionum; unde sponte sequitur, pari ratione *Christum* dici debere DEUM VERUM a DEO VERO, ac dicitur HOMO VERUS ab HOMINE VERO respectu *humanæ* suæ naturæ, quam ex sanctâ virgine assumpsit.

Quamvis igitur locutio hæc, ἐν μορφῇ Θεῆ, hoc solo in loco invenitur, cùm tamen duæ illæ antedictæ *phrases* huic planè geminæ sunt & parallæ, omnium significationem *similem* esse imò & *eandem* jure optimo colligamus: Adeoque *Christum* eatenus substituisse in *formâ DEI* quatenus *Divinam* naturam sibi à *Patre* plenariè communicatam habuerit.

2. SECUNDA *Phrasis* nobis excutienda hæc est, Οὐχ ἀεπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο — *non duxit rapinam*, hoc est, non censuit se quid præter æquum bonumque rapuisse



puisse, vindicando sibi DEO *ισόητα* five æqualitatem. Hæc *literalis* huius *locutionis* interpretatio maximo-  
pere nobis commendatur has ob ra-  
tiones.

I. OMNES *versiones antiquæ* huic interpretationi omninò suffragantur. Duæ illæ quæ alias omnes, ævi ratione, facilè vincunt, nempe vetus *Italica* & *Syriaca*, ei certè ad amussim respondent. Prior sic se habet. *Qui cùm in formâ Dei esset*, NON RAPINAM ARBITRATUS est, esse se æqualem DEO. *Syriaca* sic, Latinè, *Qui quum esset in similitudine DEI*, NEQUAQUAM RAPINAM EXISTIMAVIT, hoc ipsum, quòd esset æqualis Deo.

2. TERTULLIANUS, (qui primus, quod sciam, *Antenicænorum* locum laudat) & *Postnicæni* patres, ad unum ferè omnes, *phrasin* hanc *juxta literam* intelligunt & interpre-  
tantur.

tantur. Et magnam certè vim & pondus addit cuilibet interpretandi modo tot & tantorum virorum *con-*  
*sentiens testimonium.*

3. HAEC hujus *phrasis* interpretatio & naturalis est & facilis, & rationibus *Grammaticæ* benè conformis & accommoda.

4. NIHIL ex hoc interpretandi modo conficitur quod cum fidei *analogiâ* non optimè quadrat. *Æqualitas* enim *Filii* PATRI suo quoad essentiam Divinam, ut ex hoc hujus *phrasis* sensu satis quidem luculentè astruitur, sic ex aliis etiam quam plurimis Scripturæ locis probari potest; uti in confesso est apud *Catholicos* omnes.

5. NON tamen reticendum est hanc *interpretationem* uno incommodo impediri, quod, si non amoveatur, non parùm illi ejus officiet.



CONCIO

I.

ficiet. Objicitur enim, si *interpretatio* hæc recepta fuerit, particulam *ἀλλὰ* (quâ sextus versus cum sequenti connectitur) non suâ propriâ potiri vi, nec eo, quo & solet & debet, sensu usurpari; Sic enim verba reddi debere, ut benè sibi constet sensus, — *non duxit rapinam, parem esse cum DEO*, NIHILOMINUS sive VERUNTAMEN *se exinanivit*; at verò *ἀλλὰ* non posse hoc sensu duas clausulas connectere:

ET sanè licèt censeo non oportere, hisce in casibus, plurimi facere *criticorum minutias*, scrupulus tamen mihi vix solvendus injiceretur, si res ita prorsus se haberet ac obtenditur.

VERUMENIMVERÒ certo certius est *ἀλλὰ* non semper esse particulam *discretivam*, sed sæpè *redditivam*, & significare — *Attamen*, aut *nihilominus* — imò cum nulla conjunctio *adversativa*

*versativa* præcesserit; Et hisce dictis si- CONCIO  
I.  
dem facient sequentia Scripturæ loca. }

Εἰ ἄλλοι τῆς ἐξουσίας ὑμῶν μετέχουσιν  
ὃ μᾶλλον ἡμεῖς; ἈΛΛ' ἐκ ἐχρησάμεθα τῇ  
ἐξουσίᾳ ταύτῃ.

Μὴ παιδία γίνεσθε, ἈΛΛΑ' τῇ κακίᾳ  
ἐπιτρέφετε.

Ἰησοῦς ἦλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἀμαρτολὰς  
σῶσαι ὧν πρῶτός εἰμι ἐγώ. ἈΛΛΑ' διὰ  
τῆτο ἠλεήθη \*.

In omnibus his aliisque  
passim locis vox [ἀλλὰ] tantundem  
sonat ac *veruntamen*, aut *nihilomi-  
nus*. Quapropter critica hæc excep-  
tio nihil quicquam impedit quò  
minùs interpretatio hujus *phrasis* [τὸν  
ἀρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο] antiqua illa & *lite-  
ralis* recto suo steterit talo.

FATENDUM tamen est hanc inter-  
pretationem non omnibus *orthodoxis*  
æque placuisse. Nonnulli inter clarif-  
simos & antiquorum & recentium hæc

\* 1 Cor. ix. 12. xiv. 20. 1 Tim. i. 15, 16.



CONCIO  
I.

verba ita acceperunt ut pars haberentur eorum quæ dicuntur de CHRISTI humiliatione, & phrasin hanc [ἐχ ἀπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο] hoc modo interpretati sunt.—*Non præripuit* five non *sibi arrogavit* esse æqualem DEO; hoc est, gloriam suam Divinam & ἰσότητι occultavit, non sustinuit ostentare.

Hic certè hujus *phrasis* sensus non tantum ferendus, sed & amplectendus si vox, ἀπαγμός, id quovis modo fineret. Sed cum nec in quaquam profano Authore hoc in sensu vocem hanc usurpatam legimus, & cum voces ἀπαγμα & ἀπαγή admodum rarissimè sic usurpantur, nec sensum illum induere possunt nisi coactè, & ratione figuræ duriusculæ; & cum vix credendum est Apostolum *phrasin* adeò inusitatam, duram etiam & *metaphoricam* seligere voluisse in CHRISTI naturâ enarrandâ, priori inter-

interpretationi omninò adhærendum  
cenſeo.

CONCIO  
I.



Id tamen interea obſervatu dig-  
num eſt, eòdem prorsus rem recide-  
re, quoad *essentialem* CHRISTI *Dei-*  
*tatem* ex hoc loco probandam, five  
hoc five priori modo locum interpre-  
temur; uti uberrimè conſtabit in in-  
ſtituti noſtri progreſſu.

3. TERTIÒ diſquirendum venit  
quid ſibi velit *phraſis* — τὸ εἶναι ἴσα  
Θεῷ — Quin *Apoſtolus* hîc loquatur  
de *paritate*, five *æqualitate* CHRIS-  
TI cum DEO quoad *essentialiam*, &  
non *ſimilitudine* tantum ratione *mu-*  
*neris* alicujus externi, aut facultatis  
ſpecioſæ ei concreditæ, ut ſomniat  
*Socinus*, nemo dubitabit qui ad notif-  
ſimum *phraſis* uſum accuratè atten-  
derit.

Non nego vocem ἴσα apud *ſeptua-*  
*ginta interpretes* ſæpè denotare *ſimi-*

A a 4

*litudinem*



CONCIO  
I.

*litudinem* solum. Sic ἴσα πηλῶ, ἴσα  
 τυρῶ, ἴσα λίθῳ, rectè transferuntur IN-  
 STAR *luti, casei, lapidis* — Hoc  
 verò non obstante, cùm nullibi legi-  
 bus *vocem* ἴσα cum verbo εἶναι con-  
 junctam in sensu *similitudinis*, nequa-  
 quam sequetur *similitudinem* hîc lo-  
 ci intelligi debere vi exemplorum  
 jam laudatorum; quia illa sunt *sche-  
 mata* loquendi huic hujus loci *sche-  
 mati* nec gemina nec parallela.

QUINETIAM observatu omninò dig-  
 num est adverbium, ἴσα, ab Homero  
 SEMPER usurpari in sensu *aequalitatis*  
 sive *paritatis*, & non *similitudinis* \*.

\* ————— ἔτρεφε —————

ἴσα φίλοις τέκεσσι,

Hom. Il. E. 70, 71.

————— κατὰ ἴσα μάχην εἰάνυσσε. —————

Il. A. 336,

————— ἴσα μάχῃ τέταλο. —————

Il. O. 413

————— τιμὴν δὲ λελόγχασιν ἴσα θεοῖσι.

————— γάρ σε ζῶν ἐρίομεν ἴσα θεοῖσι.

Odyss. A. 303, 483.

Ex

*Concio Prima.*

361

CONCIO  
I.

Ex dictis constat——*phrasin*, [τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ] idem sonare ac——*esse*  
DEUM *æquè* ac DEUM, scil. *Patrem*.  
Hoc est esse ἰσόθεον five DEO *æqua-*  
*lem*.

HAEC demum est *vera, naturalis,*  
& *antiqua* hujus commatis interpre-  
tatio. “ Qui cùm DEUS *verus* fu-  
“ erit, adeoque non duxerit quid se  
“ præter æquum bonumque arripere,  
“ dum æque se esse DEUM ac Pa-  
“ trem, hoc est, dum se esse *Patri*  
“ essentialitèr *æqualem* vendicabat;  
“ nihilominus, &c.”

ET sanè hæc verba *veram & rea-*  
*lem* CHRISTI *Deitatem* adeò natu-  
ralitèr designare videntur, ut nescio  
an verba excogitari poterunt, quæ  
*dogma* illud apertius, luculentius aut  
magis *emphaticè* enarrabunt.

AT VERÒ *Socinus* hisce omnibus  
reclamat, suasque e contra hunc in  
modum



CONCIO  
I.

modum struit infidias. *Μορφή*, inquit, non internam illam *formam* five *essentiam* significat, de quâ Philosophi loquuntur & *Logici*, sed *externam* rerum *speciem*, & *figuram* de quâ boni authores *Latini* loquuntur, rei nempe *faciem* *exterio*rem; idcirco cùm CHRISTUS *in formâ DEI* fuisse dicitur, nihil aliud, si placet, intelligi debere, quàm quodammodo DEO fuisse *similem*, nempe ratione potentia quâ pollebat mari & morbis, morti & dæmonibus imperandi, atque omne genus miracula, ad missionem suam Divinam patefaciendam, edendi; Et verba demum quæ sequuntur [*ἐχ' ἀπαρχὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναί ἱσα Θεῷ*] referenda esse ad posteriorem loci hujus partem, ubi varia CHRISTI *exinanitionis* specimina memorantur; & comma totum hoc modo explicandum: “ Qui cùm DEI  
“ *simi-*

“ *similitudinem & externam quan-*  
 “ *dam imaginem five speciem gesta-*  
 “ *bat, utpote eximiâ miraculorum*  
 “ *edendorum facultate honestatus,*  
 “ *non tamen sibi arripuit five arro-*  
 “ *gavit simili in honore haberi quo*  
 “ *DEUS.*”



Huic vāsano interpretamento hæc dicta funto. Quod ad primum ejus membrum spectat, certissimum est, exempla apud *bonos*, quos vocat, *Authores Latinos*, esse admodum rara quibus probari poterit *formam* rei esse *visibilem* ejus *speciem*; imò è contrâ, ostensu esse facillimum, non *sæpè* tantum, sed & ferè *semper* denotare *internam* rei *naturam & essentiam*.

Non hujus quidem est loci singilatim hanc rem persequi, nec sane est necesse, quia tota hæc disputatio longè supra omnem dubitandi ansam jamdudum à clarissimo

*Hammondo*



CONCIO

*Hammondo* est posita. At si rem penitiùs inspiciamus, constabit *Socinum* non tantum temerè hæc effutiisse, dum novam hanc & pene inauditam *formæ* definitionem nobis obtrudit, quin & *insulsè* etiam, dum ea Apostolo dicta refert, quæ nec Apostolo, nec quovis alio sani capitis, sunt digna.

Sic enim *Apostolicam* argumentationem instituit. “ Sit idem affectus  
 “ in vobis qui fuit in CHRISTO,  
 “ qui *similis* DEO, ratione facultatis  
 “ miraculorum edendorum, tanto-  
 “ pere sese submittere sustinuit, ut  
 “ honorem ei similem qui DEO Pa-  
 “ tri penditur, non *arrogavit*, quin  
 “ *se exinanivit*, mancipii conditio-  
 “ nem suscipiendo, & ærumnosam  
 “ vitam, mortemque acerbam pati-  
 “ enter subeundo.”

At

AT QUID novæ rei atque inauditæ  
est? quodnam *humilitatis* indicium  
adeò mirandum? CHRISTUM, (ut ut  
DEO charum & miraculis edendis  
parem, aliisque præclaris dotibus ho-  
nestatum) *merum* tamen hominem,  
miseræ vitæ calamitates, & ignomini-  
osæ mortis dolores patienti animo  
pertulisse?

ANNON *Apostoli* ferè omnes eo-  
dem planè quo CHRISTUS insigniti  
sunt miracula edendi privilegio, &  
omne genus tormentorum viventes &  
morientes animo inconcusso sunt e-  
tiam perpeffi?

PARUM igitur proficit *Socinus* dum  
salvatoris nostri *παθημάτων* molem ex-  
aggerare studet, ut præclara ejus *hu-*  
*mitatis* indicia reddantur illustriora;  
quippe dum CHRISTUM purum  
putum hominem supponit, ipsum  
fundamentum labefactat & convel-  
lit



CONCIO I. lit, quo *singularis ejus humilitas* patefiat.

ETENIM, *merus* homo, ut ut donis dotibusque insignis, nihil de proprio habebit, cujus gratiâ licebit sese efferre; neque ulla *humilitatis* aliarumve virtutum specimina prodere valebit, quæ ipsa *officii* ratio non exigit, quæve illi *merito & laudi* dari possunt.

VERUMENIMVERO *Socinus* non tantum *Apostoli* argumentum retundit & enervat, sed & absurdum etiam reddit, dum CHRISTI [*τὸν ἀνθρώπον*] *humilitatem* ab Apostolo deprecatam ponit, eo nomine quod non sibi arrogavit eo in honore haberi quo DEUS SUMMUS habetur: Hoc enim modo *Apostolum* ratiocinari vult; “ Idem sit in vobis affectus  
“ qui fuit in CHRISTO, qui licet  
“ præclarâ edendi miracula potestate

“ in-

“ instructus, non tamen DEO *pari-* CONCIO

“ *tatem* sibi vindicavit, nec se DEUM I.

“ *verum* esse præ se tulit, quin se hu-

“ *miliavit;*” *scilicet* φιλὸς ἀνθρώπου

sibi non assumpsit DEO *summo* pari-

tatem, id est, hoc sibi non arrogavit,

quod si arrogasset *atrocis injuriæ*

DEO Patri factæ meritò esset postu-

landus.

VIDETIS, *academici*, quò insanix no-

vandi cupido hominem aliàs non in-

sulsum perducere valebat. Quid enim

magis væsanum a quoquam blaterari

poterit quam quod à sancto *Apostolo*

bonus hic vir dictum fuisse contendit.

Quo jure igitur Apostolum nostrum

& sapientèr & sobriè argumentum

suum instituisse credendum est, eo *So-*

*cini* commentum, immane quantum

sancto Apostolo iniquum, summâ in-

indignatione est rejiciendum.

UT

CONCIO  
II

UT VERÒ & *Socino* & *Ario* os simul obturetur, & *Catholica* hujus loci explicatio invictis rationibus probata detur, hæc quæ sequuntur expendi oportet.

I. PRIMO, Quicumque demum fit *phrasis* hujus de *CHRISTI* in *formâ DEI* subsistentiâ, sensus, de hoc nulla lis moveri poterit, nempe, *CHRISTUM* in *formâ DEI* substituisse antequam *formam servi* induerit. Memoratur enim *CHRISTI* συγκατάθεσις, & exinde occasio sumitur exemplum ejus commendandi, quòd scil. dum in *formâ DEI* extitit, non dedignatus fuit se quodammodo gloriâ suâ spoliare, *servi formâ* se vestiendo. Quid autem? Num συγκατάθεσις ulla fieri potest ubi ab *excelsiori* digniorique loco, ad *inferiorem* non fit descensus?

QUIN-



QUINIMÒ dicitur, CHRISTUM <sup>CONCIO I.</sup>  
de statu suo & dignitate cogitasse,   
imò & duxisse se *æqualem* aut certè  
quodammodo *similem* DEO, ante-  
quam sibi *servi* naturam assumpse-  
rit, unde omninò necesse erat ut huic  
*assumptioni* præextitisset.

2. SECUNDÒ, ex ipso loco luculen-  
tè constat salvatorem nostrum tunc  
temporis *servi* conditionem subiisse  
cùm *humanam naturam* sibi assump-  
serit; verba hæc sunt—*Ἐαυτὸν, ἐκένωσε*  
*μορφῇν ὁμοίας λαβὼν, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων*  
*γενόμενος* — Quæ sic juxta veterem  
*interpretem* Latinum, reddi debent.  
*Seipsum exinanivit, formam servi*  
*accipiens, in similitudine hominum*  
*factus.*

Hîc varia sententiæ membra, nul-  
la interjectâ conjunctione nexa, at  
*ἀμέσως*, ut loquuntur *grammatici*,

CONCIO  
I.

posita, planè indicant *posterius* membrum *præcedentis* explicativum esse, hoc est, rationem quodammodo et fundamentum *veritatis* ejus assignare.

Sic CHRISTUS eapropter dicitur *se exinanisse* quòd *servi formam acceperit*, atque ideo *servi formam accepisse* quia in *similitudine hominum factus est*: Homini scilicet per omnia *similis*, peccato unicè excepto.

PER *formam* igitur SERVI sanctus Apostolus omninò intelligit *humanam naturam*; non *miseram* illam & *calamitosam* vitæ conditionem, quam subiit, cum spinis coronatus, alapis percussus, flagris cæsus, sputo conspersus, cruci demum affixus, & mortem acerbam obiens, pœnam pendebat hominum delictis debitam; non *banc*, inquam, CHRISTI *luctuosam* sortem

sortem per *formam servi* *Apostolus* CONCIO  
I.  
subindicat (de hoc enim *humilitatis*  
specimine statim in sequentibus verba  
facit) sed *servilem* illam *conditionem*,  
quæ *creaturarum* omnium, ut ut per-  
fectionibus insignium, est communis,  
quâ nempe DEI sunt *servi*, eique in  
omnibus obsequii officiis devinctis-  
simi.

ET FRUSTRA certè & quàm absur-  
dè *Socinus* *mancipii* notam salvatori  
inurere conatur, ex ratione *malo-  
rum* illorum, quæ ob salutem nos-  
tram invicto animo perpeffus est.

ETENIM homo indignis modis ha-  
bitus, non eo nomine *servi* aut *vernæ*  
rationem induit. Certè *liberalis*  
tractetur illiberalitèr, & pœnis, non  
nisi *mancipio* jure irrogandis, plectatur,  
dum omnia *libertatis* jura salva illi  
maneant & integra. Et licet *Hic*



CONCIO  
I.

de immani injuriâ sibi factâ ritè conqueratur, qui verò jus libertatis ejus inde deleri affereret, delirantis prorsus loco habendus esset.

ET PROPECTO cuivis homini, utcunque natalitiis & dignitate præclaro, æque *servitutis* notam & dedecus licebit exprobrare, ac CHRISTO Domino, utpote qui non tantum *honesto* loco natus est, sed & *regiâ* stirpe ortus; et quidem tantum abfuit ut is cuiquam se mancipare sustinuerit, ut MAGISTRI & DOMINI sibi semper dignitatem asseruerit; & numero *discipulorum* satellitio stipatus, ex iis benè multos habuerit, qui mandatis ejus et se professi sunt obsequentes, & præstitere.

NULLA ergo subest ratio quare CHRISTI *servitutum* quâvis aliâ in re poni posse arbitremur, quàm in eâ creaturarum omnium *conditione essentiali*, unde five homines five angeli



geli pariter DEI *ministri* sunt & *servi* imperio divino in omnibus subiecti.

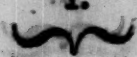
HINC est quòd statim ac *Apostolus* affirmaverat, similem hominibus *factum* fuisse, & habitu compertum ut hominem, subjungit, *factum* esse obedientem. Hoc enim eodem redit ac si dixisset *servilem* hunc CHRISTI *statum*, unde *obediens* fieri dicitur, omninò exinde fluere, quòd *humanam* sibi *naturam* sumpserat.

NEQUE sanè huic absimile est quod *Apostolus* noster indicat de *servili* omnium hominum conditione & naturâ in epistolâ ad *Galatas*\*. At ubi venit plenitudo temporis, misit DEUS *Filium suum* FACTUM EX MULIERE, FACTUM SUB LEGE. Hic enim *Apostolus* planè significat, *γινόμενον ὑπὸ νόμου* idem prorsus sonare ac *γινόμενον ἐκ γυναικὸς*, unde concludendum est, &

\* Gal. iv. 4.

Concio

I.



hoc etiam in loco *Apostolum Paulum* velle indicare CHRISTUM tunc temporis *servi formam* induisse, cum *humanâ* se *naturâ* vestiendo, divinæ legi *obstrictum* se dedit.

Ex dictis argumentum deduci potest quod tam fidem facit *interpretationi* hujus loci *Catholicæ* jam datæ quàm probationem suppeditat *salvatoris* nostri dignitatis *divinæ*, cui ne-  
tquam regeri potest.

Cum enim CHRISTUS *servi* conditionem non antè subiverit, quam naturæ suæ *prius* *existenti* naturam humanam adjunxerit; adeoque DEI *servus* non alio nomine habendus erat quam quòd *homo* factus fuerit, omninò sequitur, illum in *formâ* DEI substituisse, antequam hanc *formam* *hominis* five *servi* sibi asciverit.

NIHIL enim intercedit mediū inter ens supremum. & dependens. Qui  
summi



summi DEI attributis non pollet, & creatus, & finitus, & *servus* ut fit omninò est necesse; utpote qui respectu ad DEUM habito, qualibuscunque ornetur perfectionibus, *subiecti* loco collocandus est, & ad *obedientiam Creatori* submissè præstandam obstringitur.

HINC igitur liquidò constat, *Jesum Christum*, quoad naturam illam, quâ ante mundum conditum gaudebat, (& cujus ob rationem in DEI *formâ* substituisse dicitur, antequam *servilem* creaturæ naturam sibi induisset) et DEUM *esse*, et DEO PATRI *ÆQUAL*EM; juxtà ac expressè dicitur in verbis priùs explicatis.

2. QUINETIAM observandum est, (quodque sanè huic ratiocinio magnam vim & pondus addit) *Phrases* hæc duas——[esse in *formâ DEI*, et accepisse *formam servi*, sive, quòd

CONCIO I. eòdem redit, in hominum similitudine fieri] — sibi invicem opponi; inde enim sequitur quod quâ ratione CHRISTUS formam servi assumpsit, [hoc est, in similitudine hominum fuit factus] eâdem prorsus in formâ DEI præexistit.

CUM ergo nemo inficias iverit, CHRISTUM ita factum fuisse in similitudine hominum, ut VERUS esset homo, et realitèr particeps humanæ naturæ; omnes necesse est confiteantur, ita illum in formâ DEI substituisse ut VERUS etiam DEUS esset, essentiæ divinæ æque compos ac DEUS Pater.

UNDE fanè demirari soleo quâ fiducia freti vel Ariani vel Socinistæ hunc locum ausi sint sollicitare; cum tam adversâ fronte et horum et illorum dogmati repugnat.

IPSE certè prorsus sentio ab hoc uno et altero commate utramque causam

causam tam *Arii* quam *Socini*, quâ singuli suo modo CHRISTI divi-  
nam naturam impetunt, confossam  
esse & planè deletam, adeoque nihil  
vel *solidi* vel *speciosi* argumentis *Catholicorum* hinc desumptis aut reponi  
solere aut posse:

II. SECUNDÒ, At verò instituti nos-  
tri ratio postulat ut jam ostendam,  
quo in sensu JESUS CHRISTUS se  
*exinanivisse* dicendus est.

Ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσε—*seipsum exinanivit*,  
uti in *vulgatâ* editione legitur; se  
exhaustit, ut interpretatur *Tertullianus*.  
Hoc est majestatis suæ dignitatisque  
*gloriam* exuit, adeoque nec *pompâ*  
nec splendore se exhibuit *spectabi-*  
*lem*.

NEUTIQUEAM tamen illum ita glo-  
riam suam exuisse censeamus, ut  
quâvis ratione *DEI formâ* inde  
destitueretur.

UNDE



CONCIO  
I.

UNDE licet gloriam suam velavit, illam tamen non extinxit; dum *excellentiam* dignitatis suæ & ineffabilem *splendorem* nec ostentavit, nec patefecit, ejusdem interea *dignitatis*, & præstantiæ omnino compos fuit, quam æterno DEI Filio defuisse planè incongruum est et impossibile.

HAEC verò gloriæ suæ occultatio mirandum planè omnibusque titulis celebrandum est *humilitatis* indicium. Et quomodo illa facta est verba sequentia explicant. Quòd nempe, *formâ servi* acceptâ, *similis hominibus factus*, & habitu compertus *ut homo*, ipse se *submisit*, factus *obediens ad mortem*, mortem autem *crucis*.

EGREGIA sanè hæc sunt *exinanitionis* specimina, simul & humillimi, summæque patientis animi indicia.

Non mirum igitur quòd *Apostolus* hinc occasionem sumat tam *eximium*  
*humilitatis*

*humilitatis exemplum omnibus Chri-* CONCIO  
*stianis commendandi.* I.  


Et mihi jam incumbit

III. TERTIÒ, Affectus illos singil-  
latim vobis ob oculos ponere, ad quos  
excitandos & acuendos *præclarum* hoc  
*salvatoris nostri exemplum* apprimè  
conducit.

I. PRIMO, *Hoc exemplum* moneat  
omnes, utcunque stirpe, aut gloriâ,  
aut doctrinâ aut opibus claros, id sem-  
per persuasissimum habere, non sibi  
minùs quàm inferiori loco positis,  
*animi summissi affectum* decori esse  
& ornamento. Hinc *illi* æque ac cæ-  
teri mortales discant sibi neutiquam  
licere, vel fastu superbire, vel de do-  
nis dotibusque suis jactitare, vel a-  
lios quoscunque contemptui habere,  
vel inanis gloriolæ auram captare.



Si enim CHRISTUS, cui summi DEI & natura & attributa *compe-*tebant, non tantum dum inter homines agebat *dignitatem* suam, quam apud PATREM ante mundum conditum gaudebat, palam facere non sustinuit, quin *splendorem majestatis* suae penitus operuit, & *privati hominis*, nullis titulis nullis insignibus ornati, *sortem* induere dignatus est; omnino constat *externam* pompam, & *visibilem* dignitatis splendorem, nemini esse *vero* honori aut ornameto.

2. SECUNDO, Hujus *exempli* hor-  
tatu, ad omnia ardua & imbelli na-  
turae nostrae ingrata, cum officii ra-  
tio postulaverit, alacriter peragenda  
facile movebimur.

PUDERE jam oportet quenquam  
vitae *aequabilitatem* non servare; pu-  
dere oportet vel res adversas animo  
in-



inconcusso non ferre, vel ignomi-  
 niæ & infamiæ metu frangi; pudere  
 oportet quenquam non esse con-  
 tentum & suo & parvo; non etiam  
*impavidè* subire quæcunque *provi-*  
*dentia* objecerit, vel ad vitam, vel ad  
 mortem spectantia.

CUM ipse *vitæ & gloriæ* DOMINUS  
 & *vitam luctuosam & mortem acer-*  
*bam* animo tranquillo subire non est  
 dedignatus. Mortem nempe, & *Ju-*  
*dæis & Romanis* testibus, *diram & in-*  
*famem.*

NON quidem legimus capitalis sup-  
 plicii reos *crucifixione* apud *Judæos*  
 plecti solere; benè notum tamen est  
 hominum nefariorum corpora arbo-  
 ribus suspensa, (quæ emphaticè *co-*  
*ram DEO suspendi* dicebantur) pe-  
 culiari modo *maledicta* & execran-  
 da haberi. Et *crucifixio*, proprie sic  
 dicta, apud *Romanos* usu recepta,  
 nunquam

Concio  
I

nunquam irroganda erat nisi *vernīs* solis, iisque scelerum atrocissimorum reis; unde constat CHRISTUM DOMINUM non tantum communem illam *humanae naturae* sortem lubenter subiisse, quā omnibus semel mortui est occumbendum; quin & *ignominiam* etiam, & cruciatus solis facinorosis, iisque ignobili loco natis, infligendos patienti animo perpeffum esse; cum, tanquam *ovis coram tonsoribus suis obmutescit*, sic & ille os suum non aperuit.

Hinc certè edocendi sunt omnes nec se insolentèr de *dignitate* suā, si quā emineant, efferre, nec cœlum petere iracundiā, si paulò asperius tractentur; quin in omnibus se præstare *divinae* voluntati morigeros, *causamque* suam ei patientèr *committere*, qui semper *justè* iudicat.

SIN



SIN etenim vel acerbissimis cruciatibus & mœroribus tententur, secum eodem modo ratiocinari debent, quocum focio suo *Καὶ ἐργῶ* argumentatus est *fur pœnitens*——Numnam DEI *justitiam non pertiemesimus*, qui tam inquieto animo *Providentiæ* decreta perferimus, qui in eodem tantum calamitatis gradu sistimur, quo ipse DEI filius innocuus? Non equidem tam acerba, ac ille passus est, vel patimur vel pati possumus; quin & quæcunque tandem sint, pœnas solum meritas damus; *ille vero ἔδεν ἄτοπον* nihil *inconcinni* nedum *culpabilis* admisit.

3. TERTIO, hinc discamus rectum iudicium ferre de calamitatibus & infortuniis vitæ, nunc bonis nunc malis, sine notabili discrimine, inflictis; nempe non semper *irati numinis*, de hominum delictis vindictam sumen-  
tis, esse indicia.

SAL.



CONCIO  
I.

~ SALVATOR enim noster *insons* licèt  
& *perfectus*, cui nec inimici infen-  
sissimi quid vel criminis vel culpæ ob-  
jicere potuerint, luctuosa magis, ma-  
jisque calamitosa subiverit quàm quæ  
vel *sceleratissimi* unquam sunt per-  
pessi.

HINC enim omnes monendi sunt  
sibi sedulò cavere, ne hominibus *in-  
felicibus* onus et farcinam augeant,  
id *dedecori* et *pænæ* iis vertendo, quod,  
quantum certò intelligere potue-  
rint, vel probandi eorum *patientiam*,  
vel *eximias virtutes* illustrandi gratiâ,  
omninò a DEO sit missum.

*Gloria sit DEO, PATRI, FILIO  
et SPIRITUI SANCTO, in sæcula sæculo-  
rum. Amen.*

Concio

## Concio Altera.

i Ep. ad Tim. Cap. i. Com. 19.

\*Εχων πίσιν καὶ ἀγαθὴν συνείδησιν, ἣν τινες  
ἀπωσάμενοι, περὶ τὴν πίσιν ἐναυάγη-  
σαν.

*Retinens Fidem & bonam Conscienti-  
am; Quâ expulsâ, nonnulli nau-  
fragium Fidei fecerunt.*

**Q**UÆ in priori *hæc*, ut & in pos- CONCIO  
II.  
teriori *illâ* sancti *Pauli* ad  
*Timotheum* *epistolâ*, scripta re-  
perimus, eò maximè spectant, ut ille,  
quem *Apostolus Ephesinæ* ecclesiæ du-  
dum præfecisset *Episcopum*, ad om-

CONCIO  
II.

ne *Episcopalis* officii munus plenè  
 ~~~~~ instrueretur. Idcirco *Apostolus* varia  
 ei dat monita & præcepta, alia de *e-*
lectione & ordinatione Presbyterorum,
 cæterorúmque ecclesiæ ministrorum;
 alia de *disciplinâ & censuris ecclesi-*
asticis; alia de *doctrinâ* ab illo præ-
 dicandâ; alia denique de *sanctimo-*
niâ, vitæque integritate ab omnibus
 colendâ.

Quod ad illud præceptum attinet
 quod *textus* complectitur, non opus
 est ut ulteriùs retrospiciamus, quàm
 ad *versum* proximè præcedentem, ut
 sensus ejus et *Apostoli* mens plenè
 intelligatur. Ibi enim *Apostolus* hoc
 præceptum *Timotheo* commendat, ut
 nempe, secundùm *prægressas* de illo
Propphetias militaret per eas bonam
illam militiam; verba igitur *textûs*
 eò inserviunt ut accuratiùs explicetur
 quo tandem modo *bona illa militia*
 milite-

militetur, quam commate præcedenti CONCIO II. filio suo injunxerat *Apostolus*; Hoc verò hisce duobus absolvi afferit—
retinendo scilicet fidem, & bonam conscientiam.

I. PRIMUM ergo *bonæ hujus militiæ munus* exercetur *retinendo fidem*; hoc est, firmitè credendo, & fortiter confitendo omnem *veritatem Christianam*, cunctaque illa dogmata quæ ei ex adverso contrariantur (quorum nonnulla etiam tunc temporis infestabant *ecclesiam*) strenuè impugnando. At nemo *fide solâ* omnes veri *Christiani* numeros poterit implere; neque omnis qui *Christianæ militiæ* dederit nomen, & in jus ditionemque *Domini Jesu* concesserit, vel fortis & animosi militis, vel frugis & integri servi semper exequutus fuerit munia.

CONCIO
II.

MULTI enim sunt (uti ex ipsius *Salvatoris* verbis certum habemus) * qui per nomen *CHRISTI* prophetarint, atque in *CHRISTI* nomine e-
jecerint dæmonia, virtutésque alias mirandas ediderint, & nihil tamen lucri exinde fecerint, quia *Satanæ* & peccato sese manciparint. Jure optimo, igitur *Apostolus* noster huic suo primo mandato de fide retinendâ, illud

2. ALTERUM subjungit, de bonâ conscientia simul retinendâ ; Quo omnes monitos velit ne satis ducant omnia veræ fidei dogmata animitus amplecti, nisi si & vitam fidei suæ per omnia instituant consentaneam ; his utpote duobus fide nimirum & obedientia militiam Christianam quasi adimpleri & perfici.

* Matth. vii. 22, 23.

QUINETIAM *Apostolus* non tantùm hîc loci innuere velit, utraque hæc in se spectata esse apprimè necessaria; at mutuum illa ad se invicem habere respectum; hocque demum ab altero ita stabiliri & fulciri, ut unum nequeat factum tectum conservari, si deficiat alterum; *Fidémque* adeo esse *obedientiæ fundamentum*, *obedientiam*, e contra, *fidei stabilimentum* & fulcrum; *neminem*, denique, *sine fide DEO* posse placere, omnesque è diverso qui *bonam conscientiam expulerint fidei etiam suæ naufragium facturos*. Quod hoc in loco nudè asserit *Apostolus* ei postea fidem facit duo illa, *Hymenæi & Alexandri*, addendo exempla. Nobis, in animo est,

I. PRIMÒ, Hanc *Apostoli assertio- nem* quàm possumus luculentè vo-

CONCIO
II.

bis reddere illustratam atque confirmatam.

II. SECUNDÒ, *Corollaria* nonnulla ex dictis deducere, quæ potissimum pietati & bonis moribus inserviant promovendis.

I. PRIMÒ igitur conabor ostendere *fidem* cum *obedentiâ* quàm arctissimè connecti, adeoque eos qui *bonam expulerint conscientiam fidei etiam suæ* sæpissimè *facere naufragium*. Hujus propositionis veritas ut clariùs elucescat, quædam sunt breviter præmittenda.

1. *Primò*, eò omnia præcepta evangelica tendunt, huncque ad exitum pænè unice properant, ut pietas, sanctitas, omnesque *virtutes*, quæ *morales* audiunt, ab omnibus religiosissimè excolantur. Hoc adeò omnibus est in confesso,

fesso, ut supervacaneum planè esset id operosè demonstrare.

2. *Secundò*, uti omnia *Evangelii* præcepta *virtutem*, *morumque puritatem* injungunt strictissimè; ita etiam omnia illa *Evangelii* dogmata, quæ *Christianæ fidei* audiunt *articuli*, apprimè conducunt dictæ sanctimonix vitæque integritati promovendæ, & firmandæ.

PERITIOR enim erat, longè peritior *Architectus salvator noster*, quàm ut domum suam levitè in arenam fundaret. Probè novit ille frustrà se hominibus impositurum *gravia onera* & portatu difficilia, si argumentis satis validis, & præmiis satis amplis, eos ad *illa* fortitè sustinenda non invitasset. Verum enimvero, si legibus suis *bonum* & *æquum* & rectum præcepisset, interea tamen dogmata pro-

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II.

posuisset *credenda*, ex quibus rectè argueretur *virtutis* studium non esse præter omnia necessarium, *dissidens* jam *regnum suum* esset *adversus se*, adeoque non posset non *vastari*. Unde sequitur,

3. *Tertiò*, Omnia illa *dogmata* quæ *probitati* & *bonis moribus* quovis pacto refragentur, atque ex quibus *virtutis* studium, quodammodo improbari aut labefactari videatur *falsa esse* protinus & absurda. Quippe cùm *vera* omnia sibi maximè sunt congrua & consentanea, & cùm multa sunt *dogmata* summâ *fide* amplexanda, quæ *probitatem* & *virtutem* nunquam non colendam fovendamque decernant, si quæ alia vel ab angelo à cœlis dilapso vulgarentur, quæ *virtutem* ut *inutilem* minúsque necessariam docerent; ut falsa illa sint, absurda, & iniqua, omninò est necesse.

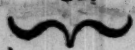
HISCE

HISCE præmissis facile erit ostensu quàm proclives illi fuerint ad errorem qui vitio & libidini sunt dediti; quam facilis à *malis moribus* ad *malam fidem* fuerit prolapsio; adeoque quàm continuo suæ fidei naufragium fecerint, qui *virtuti & bonæ conscientiae* nuntium remiserint.

I. PRIMÒ itaque a vitiis in errorem *naturalis* est prolapsio, adeoque à *malis moribus* *Hæreses* pestiferæ non raro profluxerunt, quia vitiis quicunque operam dederit, non possit non velle atque ex animo optare, ut *vera* illa sint *dogmata* omnia quæ vitiis ejus suffragari videantur.

2. SECUNDÒ, Quia quod quis *verum* fore speret & exoptet, id sibi facili negotio persuaserit esse *verissimum*.

I. PRIMÒ, Inquam, qui vitiis & libidini est deditus non potest non velle atque ex animo optare ut *vera* tan-



tandem illa *dogmata* evadant, quæ
vitiis suis laxent fræna.

Est enim naturale, idque præfervidum, omnium hominum *tranquilli statûs* desiderium, huc varia illa & pænè infinita eorum studia & proposita diriguntur, ut nempe animi curæ & sollicitudines sopiantur, ut aculeis nullis præcordia tententur, ut demum res suæ omnes *statu placido* sint sitæ.

QUAM impossibile verò sit, ut quispiam felici hoc rerum suarum statu perfruatur, qui vitiis inquinatus suæ se mancipârit libidini, interea dum et *Christum* revereatur et *dogmata* ejus (quantumcunque vitiis suis repugnantia) *verissima* judicet, nemo non dispiciat. Dum enim aliud suadet *mens* ejus, aliud *cupido*; dum *fides* libidini fræna injicit, *libido* è contra cum *fide* conflictatur; dum plurima demum ille
2 expetit

expetit quæ seriò improbat, & seriò improbat quæ sibi interea sunt voluptati & blandimento; gravissimas necesse est, *stultitiæ* suæ pendat pœnas, dum *desiderii* & *timoris* tam miserè vicissim angitur cruciatu.

NEQUE sanè ullo modo componi possit lucta hæc inter *mentem* corporisque *appetitus*, nisi vel *hi* comprimantur penitus, rationisque in ditionem redigantur, vel *illa* libidini turpitèr inserviat, & appetitûs consilia servilitèr expleat.

CUM igitur is, de quo jam sermo est, improbus sit & flagitiosus, cùm se rationis consilio neutiquam subijcere sustineat, sollicitudo mentis suæ non aliter sopiri, aut conscientiaæ aculei retundi possunt, nisi si *ratio* omninò cogatur in *appetitûs* partes concedere. Cùm verò id non facilè contingere possit dum *fides* salva maneat & incolumis, non mirum si *illa* de-

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II.

deponatur confestim, tanquam gravis *sarcina*, & difficilis portatu: Nil mirum si, malè moratus cùm sit, doctrinam omnem vitio contrariam refugiat, malletque eorum in sententiam abire, qui quicquid libet id sibi licere existimant; si mallet illis se adungere quibus est persuasum aut DEUM non esse, aut res humanas *illi* non esse curæ; quos vāsana invasit opinio aut animas corporibus non fore superstitēs, aut, si fortè supervixerint, non talem sortem illas mansuram esse, qualem animis vitio inquinatis *Salvator* noster est minatus.

SERVA *mandata*; inquit *salvator* noster; O misera *salutis* ratio! inquit improbus; quam multo gratior est ille *Atheorum* error (si demum error sit) qui *genio* suo indulgentes dulcibus vitæ solatiis perfruuntur, omnique voluptatum genere sese affatim

fatim explent, nullo interea peccato-
rum reatu confecti, nullo *inani me-*
tu concussi! Quantum præstat cum
illis *desipere*, quam hunc in modum
sapere & vapulare! Quanto esset op-
tabilius de vero et bono aut nihil aut
perperam judicare, quàm acribus his-
ce *conscientiæ* stimulis vexari, tor-
queri! O si id tandem omne lice-
ret, quod adblanditur sensibus, id-
que *impunè* fieret quod liberet fa-
cere!

U T hæc atque hisce similia secum
cogitet & animo revolvat *malè mo-*
ratus Christianus est prorsus necesse;
quàmque facilis sit ab hisce princi-
piis ad ulteriora progressus nemo non
dispiciat. Etenim

II. SECUNDÒ quod quispiam
sæpè & seriò velit et exoptet esse
verum, id tandem sibi persuadeat esse
veris-

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II.

verissimum. Non tamen statuimus *intellectus* *judicium* ita immediatè, & necessariò *voluntati* subiacere, quasi quippiam vel verum vel falsum reputetur pro lubitu. Non enim penes nos est propositionem aliquam vel ut *veram* admittere, vel *falsam* respuere, nisi mediantibus argumentis illis quorum ope *veritas* & elicitur & illustratur.

IN *voluntate* tamen situm est argumenta illa vel *seriò* vel *levitèr* perpendere; *voluntatis* est rationibus rerumque momentis *multum parumve* immorari; in *voluntate* demum ponitur quandocunque res ulla *intellectui* sistatur examinanda, utrum illa *atque* & accuratè, an *levitèr* & perfunctoriè trutinâ pensetur.

ET proinde cùm nulla pænè sit causa de cujus alterutrâ parte multa afferri non possint probabilia, & veri
speci-

speciem præ se ferentia; cùmque in
iis quæ *ad praxin* spectant omnes
vel in hanc vel illam partem faciliori
longè momento propellimur, prout
mores nostri vivendique ratio nos in-
clinant, vix fieri potest ut ea non *at-*
tentiùs & accuratiùs perscrutemur,
iisque *diutiùs* atque *lubentiùs* inhære-
amus, quæ opinionem aliquam genio
nostro moribùsque congruam stabi-
liant & confirment, quàm quæ *illam*
improbare aut labefactare videantur.

QUIBUS autem quisque rationibus
plurimùm immoretur, ut iis moveatur
plurimùm omninò est necesse. Cum
igitur, ut supradictum est, omnia *reli-*
gionis dogmata, uti loquitur *Apostolus*,
secundùm pietatem sunt, non mirum
si ea omnia ingrata sint & vix feren-
da *impio* homini & flagitioso.

Eò igitur facilè adduci potest *om-*
nis improbus ut quæ pravis ejus af-
fectibus

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II.

W fecibus adversentur, verissima illa licet & certissima, *malit falsa*, ægréque ferat rationibus et argumentis firmari; quæque iis adblandiantur, utcunque falsa, absurda, impossibilia, *malit tamen vera*, validisque rationibus defendenda; et quid mirum, si ille *iniquum* ferat *judicium*, qui hunc in modum à recto æquoque *præ appetitu* effræno abducitur? Si is cui *veritas* est odio à *veritate* desciscat? Aut cui *error* est cordi is in *errorem* pronus prolabatur? Ipsa rei natura videtur hoc exigere; adeoque satis jam constat, quare qui *bonam conscientiam* aut non acquisiverint aut non servaverint *illibatam*, *fidei* etiam *sue* tandem aliquando *fecerint naufragium*. Accedimus jam ad

II. SECUNDAM instituti nostri partem. Ut nempe *corollaria* quædam ex dictis deducamus. I. *Primò*.

1. *Primò*, Ex dictis facilè respon- CONCIO II.
deatur *Atheis, Deistis*, cæterisque
quibus omnis Religio est odio, cùm
Christianam Religionem exinde DEO
acceptam referri non debere conten-
dunt, quòd cùm plus mille & sexcen-
tis annis est mundo cognita, vix ta-
men à decimâ cujusvis ævi parte est
recepta, pluribûsque etiam locis, in qui-
bus olim fuit exculta, jam ferè ex-
tincta est atque exterminata. Huic,
inquam, objectioni, ex dictis facillimè
respondeatur.

QUID enim? Idne volunt hi homi-
nes, *Religionem* divinitùs inspiratam
non posse non ab omnibus agnosci
quibus uspiam prædicetur? Quo ve-
rò pacto hoc contingat? Anne DEUS
hominum voluntati vim inferre sup-
ponatur? Hoc autem nec congruum
est DEI attributis nec hominum na-
turæ. *Vult quidem DEUS omnes ho-*

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II.

omnes *servari*, & ut *serventur*, vult
 omnes ad agnitionem veritatis veni-
 re. At vult interea ut sua veniant
 sponte, non ut vi cogantur. CHRIS-
 TUS nolenti suum non imponit ju-
 gum. Hortatur quidem omnes ut sese
 illius imperio subjiciant; invitos ve-
 ro, renitentes & repugnantes non
 cogit sub ditionem. Imò neminem
 in numero suorum habet qui non li-
 bere accedat, & institutioni ejus ita ex
 animo pareat, ut *Dominium* ejus &
justum & legitimum lubens gaudens-
 que confiteatur. Minime igitur est
 mirum si *Christiani* quovis ævo exi-
 gui admodum fuerint numero, cum
 tam pauci uspiam extiterint æqui bo-
 nique cultores. Neque porro mire-
 mur multo jam pauciores esse quàm
 olim, cum *etas parentum* pejor a-

* 1 Tim. ii. 4.

vis nos tulerit nequiores. Cum enim Religio Christiana sit pura, solis puris allubescere possit. Non igitur miremur illam omnium calculis non fuisse comprobata; miremur potius à tam multis fuisse ex animo receptam. Confiteamur potius, quod res est, DEI Providentiæ & auspiciis omnino acceptum esse referendum, quod portæ inferorum non dudum prævaluerint, quod fides non olim extincta fuerit, & ecclesia funditus everfa.

2. Secundo, Ut ingens illa Christianam religionem respuentium turba ipsam religionis veritatem non impugnat, ita nec illam magis convellit foeda Hæresium colluvies, quæ misere semper ecclesiam vexarit.

NAM cum Hæreses & errores plerique omnes (uti jam monstravimus) originem suam à pravis hominum affectibus ducunt, non magis expectandum

CONCIO
II.

tandum est nulla fore ecclesiæ mem-
bra quorum *fides*, quam quorum vi-
ta sit nequam & contaminata.

RELIGIO *Christiana* cumulatè vin-
dicabitur, quotcumque demum sint
opinionēs illæ quæ pacem *ecclesiæ*
violaverint. Quamdiu enim super-
bia, hypocrisis, mundanæ cupiditates,
pertinacia locum habuerint inter eos
qui CHRISTI nomen profitentur,
tamdiu & *Hæreses exitiales* infestabunt
ecclesiam.

QUAMDIU *Religio* repugnauerit ho-
minum *libidini* & pravis propositis,
tamdiu non deerunt qui obviam ibunt,
& repugnabunt *Religioni*; aut om-
nes saltem intendent nervos ut illam
in suas contorqueant partes; adeo
ut donec homines desiverint *decipere*
& *decipi*; finisque fuerit impositus
præjudicio & *studio partium* nequit
fieri quin *Hæreses* ecclesiam consci-
derint.

3. Tertiò,

3: Tertiò, Ex antedictis constat *Hæreses* & dogmata illa pernicioſa quæ hætenus eccleſiam vexaverint non impedire, quo minùs DEI ſapien-
tia & bonitas uberrimè ſe prodant in eccleſiâ ſuâ gubernandâ. Nam (uti jam oſtendimus) mala illa non à DEO proveniunt quin à *pravis* ſtudiis & *iniquis* affectibus hominum. Ab ipſis enim hominibus eſt quòd *li-
bertas* illa quam iis DEUS conceſſit in bonum, ut plurimùm cedat in maximum eorum damnum. Iſ enim conceditur eſſe bonis ex *con-
ſcientiâ recti* & *honesti*; & obedire Creatori ſuo ex ratione *gratitudinis*, & quòd ſentiant DEUM eſſe ſum-
mè *bonum* & *miſericordem*. Sed proh ingratos homines qui hâc *li-
bertate* in licentiam abuti & gratiam DEI ad laſciviam transferre non ve-
rentur!



Concio Altera.

DEUS interea ea omnia perfecit quæ ullo modo conducere possunt humano generi intra officii sui limites continendo. Quid illud est quod non summâ curâ magnus ille *Vinitor* adhibuit ut *vinetum* suum cultum sit & ferax? Illud circumsepsit saluberrimis legibus, legibus quæ præ se ferunt puritatem suam, utpote quæ *sancta* sunt, *iusta*, *bona*.

CULTORES item huic suo *Vineto* præfecit, sacerdotes scil. qui homines in fide firmarent; qui illis gratiæ adhiberent instrumenta & media; qui eos denique contra vesanam omnem doctrinam aut *Hæresin* munirent. Sin ergo homines obstinatè sint increduli, aut dogmata ulla perniciose amplecti & palam ferere non vereantur, hoc tantum ideo evenit quia illud possunt: Tantùm enim abest interea ut à DEO sit quod exitiales

itiales hæc *Hæreses* amplectentur, ut cum maximè ab illis est dehortatus, tum *Hæresiarchis* omnibus penas acerbissimas minatus est.

4. *Quartò* ex dictis sequitur *Hæreses* et *falsa dogmata* non esse argumento *sacras Scripturas* esse vel *obscuras* vel *imperfectas*. Si enim *bonæ conscientie* ablegatio homines adigat ad *fidei naufragium*, si *Hæreses* pravis hominum studiis sint ascribenda, quantumvis clara et perspicua sit *sacra pagina* (certissima illa et *fidei* et *morum regula*) non tamen exinde cavebitur, ne male torqueatur.

SI OMNIA ista Evangelii præcepta quæ adeo diserte peccatum omne damnant Orco, à peccato homines cohibere non valeant; Quænam sunt illa Evangelii dogmata quæ adeo clare et diserte tradi possint ut illa torquere, sensumque naturali et ge-

CONCIO
II

nuino contrarium elicere nequiverit
 ~~~~~ pervicacissima hæc horum hominum  
 ~~~~~ solertia?

5. Quinto ex dictis non difficile
 est explicatu, unde sit quod Ecclesia
Anglicana ab ipsis Reformationis suæ
 primordiis hunc usque in diem tam
 multos habuerit ab utroque latere in-
 sensissimos hostes. Inde enim est quod
 dogmata sua ipsi *Scriptura* et *pri-
 mæve Puritati* apprimè sunt acco-
 moda. Inde est quod Hominibus pec-
 candi copiam nullâ de causâ, nullo
 sub prætextu, aufit indulgere.

Quod, licet *multum discriminis* in-
 tercedere statuat inter peccata diversa,
 omnia tamen decernat esse in se *mor-
 talia*.

Quod apud illam *indulgen-
 tiæ*, quæ dicuntur *nullæ* sint, quin se-
 riò injungat singulis suis membris bo-
 norum operum necessitatem; *pæni-
 tentiamque* ad salutem non aliam va-

lere agnoscat, quàm quæ vitam verè renovatam adjunctam habeat comitem. Ut omnia demum verbo complectar, quòd ea unicè præscribat quæ pura sunt et sancta, & quæ vitæ morumque integritatem promoveant maximè; quòdque *Ministros* suos hujusmodi dogmata, eaque sola prædicandi donet potestate. Hæc enim porta angusta nimis est quam ut plurimi per illam ad regnum cœleste affectent viam. Atque hinc est quòd de viâ rectâ declinent, viâque sceleris ingrediantur; omnesque, qui illos deducere conantur, odio habeant et contemptui.

6. *Sextò et ultimò*, Si errores fidèſque corrupta originem suam iniquis corruptisque hominum moribus debeant, argumentum inde gravissimum fumatur, quàm maximè congruum sit rationi et æquitati, ut tam *Civiles*

CONCIO
II.

les quàm Ecclesiastica potestates Hæ-
reses exitiales quascunque pro posse
suo nitantur comprimere.

Eadem enim ratio quæ magistra-
tum permoveat ad *malè moratos* su-
os subditos vinculis, exilio, aut damno
aliquo coercendos, illum etiam per-
moveat ad leges condendas quæ *Hæ-
reticorum* ferociam et insaniam com-
primat et debellet. Quâ enim rati-
one, quove jure *Hæreticus* quispiam
immunem se contendat à castigatio-
ne censoriâ, cui *malè moratus* om-
ninò subjicitur? Cùm *Hæreses* ple-
ræque omnes tam genuina sunt *pra-
ve conscientie* proles.

CUM ergo omnibus in confesso
est omninò quadrare cum veræ re-
ligionis modestiâ ut homines quâvis
sanâ methodo, severâ illâ licet et a-
cerbâ, inter *officii sui* *moralis* limi-
tes contineantur, cur non etiam co-
erceantur

erceanur a fidei suæ naufragium faciendo? Concio II.

CERTO certius enim est homines pœnæ metu sapius urgeri, quos monita, amara licet atque aspera, incassum inceslerint; et quomodocunque sese erroribus suis oblectent improbi, mente suâ non inviti illos premerent, si modo constaret non sine magno suo damno illos disseminatū iri. Certe non contumaciter in *Catholicam fidem* sese erigere & confirmare, aut infestas suas *Hæreses* quavaversum spargere auderent, si istiusmodi diligentia longe nimium sollicita, in grave eorum incommodum tandem esset cessura.

Non hæc dicta velim in excusationem eorum qui methodo inhumana & crudeli *Hæreticos* ad sanam mentem redigere conarentur. Modum illum retundendi *Hæresin* nec Christianum

stianum nec prudentem autumo. Hoc non obstante omnino est tenendum; Magistratui potestatem competere, quâ, per modum pœnæ, dictorum hominum perviciæ eatur obviam. Nulla enim ratio, charitas nulla, nulla moderatio nos cogit suspicari Atheis, Deistis, Arianis, Socinistis (qui vel DEUM, vel *sacra* ejus *mysteria* impuro ore nunquam non profcindunt) licere blasphemias suas impunè blaterare. Quin leges jure condantur quæ horum hominum *insolenti* audaciæ cohibendæ, erroribusque sedandis inserviant, saltem quæ efficiant quo minus venenum serpat latius, nemini possit esse dubitandi locus. Comprecemur igitur Omnes ut Magistratui & Populo ita suam DEUS largiatur *gratiam*, ut et Ille *rectè jubeat*, et Hic *animatus* se subjectum præbeat, per et propter merita JESU CHRISTI.

CUI

Concio Altera.

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CUI *simul* & PATRI & SPIRITUI

CONCIO
II.

SANCTO *fit honos & gloria in*
secula seculorum. Amen.

Gratia Domini nostri **JESU**
CHRISTI, *charitas DEI, et com-*
municatio SPIRITUS SANCTI fit
nobiscum omnibus. Amen.

CONCIONES

CLERUM

Habite in Templo B. Mariæ apud

CAN 57 26

Hæc pro Gradu Baccalaureatus

Illæ pro Gradu Doctoratus

In sacra Theologia

A JOANNE WARREN, S. T. P. Collegii
Regin. Cantab. nuper Socio.

